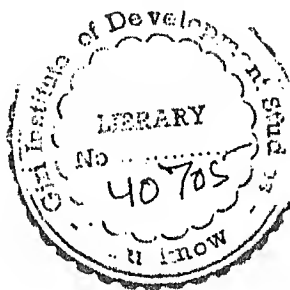


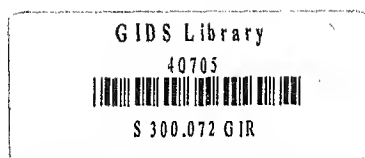
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**Social Science Research and Education:  
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6-7 November, 2009



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# **NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA**

**T.S. Papola**



## **IASSI Conference on Social Science Research and Education : Trends and Issues**

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# National Perspective on Social Science Development in India\*

by

T.S. Papola

## Development of Social Science Research in India

The tradition of social science teaching and research in India is now almost a century old, beginning with the introduction of the modern university system of education in the country during the third quarter of the last century. Following the British tradition of liberal education, the education system in India incorporated social sciences as an important component of college curricula. It was natural in the beginning that the contents of social science teaching and research in India primarily aimed at dissemination and elaboration of the received theories and concepts of European, especially British social science. But soon, a trend developed, in a limited but a significant way, of questioning the relevance and validity of such propositions and concepts and of asking specifically Indian questions, though still following the methodology and logic of British classical thinking. This trend also became, subsequently, an integral part of the ideology of the national movement for independence. While this trend continued on the basis of individual and isolated efforts, it could not grow on an organised and institutional basis due to the hostile attitude of the British government towards thinking which could foster, directly or indirectly, nationalist feelings. The mainstream social science teaching and research, therefore, continued to be positivist-theoretic and rather unquestioning in approach. Nevertheless, a corpus of social science knowledge developed which, combined with the growing body of factual information through official and individual efforts, on the one hand, and increasing strength and maturity

of the national movement leading to the questioning of all things foreign, on the other, led to the emergence of an independent body of thought and literature, particularly during the 1930's and 1940's, mainly exploring a path for India's socio-economic regeneration and development after independence. In this process, the exposure of the Indian Intellectuals, both academic and political, to the socialist development in Soviet Russia, and rise of Mahatma Gandhi on the Indian political and intellectual scene emphasising, *swadeshi* (indigenous) element in thought and action, played an important role in shaping the contents of new socio-economic thinking.

After independence, social science teaching and research grew at an unprecedented pace. There took place a manifold increase in the number of professional social scientists due to the expansion of the higher education system. The multitude and diversity of problems that surfaced themselves once the country embarked upon a programme of planned socio-economic development, provided tremendous scope for enquiry and research by social scientists. In terms of content and method, the holistic and trans-disciplinary approach of the pre-Independence period gave way to the specialised and discipline-based studies, both on account of the need to study various problems in their specificity and the growing specialisation in the various social science disciplines into separate departments in the universities. Discipline-based social science research, with a strong empirical bias, experienced rapid growth. The questioning of accepted Western doctrines and propositions which had started even in the pre-Independence period

\* Paper presented by Dr. T.S. Papola, Director, Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow, at the Conference of the Asian Association of Social Science Research Councils (AASREC), held in Sydney in October 1983.



got further fillip as fresh evidence based on the experience of socio-economic development in the country in its various sectors and aspects started coming up. The need obviously was felt both by development planners and policy makers and academic social scientists to carry out more and more empirical investigations. Researches resulted in throwing up a large volume of useful information, no doubt, which in many cases was fruitfully utilised to examine certain accepted propositions on relationships among socio-economic variables. But most research attempts stopped short of formulating alternative hypotheses, propositions and theories. Most researches could thus suggest that the received theory did not explain a phenomenon, but little emerged by way of positive statement on its explanation. To a certain extent, it was an inevitable result of the dominant methodological framework utilised in most studies. The Indian social scientists for the first time had a large scale exposure to and interaction with the American social science tradition of quantitative variety. It helped bring precision and specificity in research work but, at the same time, the tools of research also brought with them the approach and framework of analysis which was not always found appropriate for dealing with the problems on hand. The scheme of variables envisaged as explanatory factors, chosen on the basis of an alien situation, proved inadequate, leaving a large part of the phenomenon unexplained. Rigorous efforts were made to improve identification and specification of variables with useful but still inadequate results. It seems that structural and institutional variables, which are not always easy to quantify, have a significant, if not a major, role in economic and social processes in India, and the dominant mode of analysis, based on quantitative techniques was not able to cope with them fully.

The above limitation notwithstanding, empirical-quantitative methods contributed significantly to the augmentation of research output, due to its relatively quick yielding nature as compared to the historical-deductive approach. Rapid expansion of the higher education system and multitude of researchable problems surfacing in the process of planned socio-economic change, combined with the appeal and popularity of the empirical quantitative method, led to a fast increase in the volume of research, as is reflected in the published volumes of the results of the ICSSR stock-taking exercise of Surveys of Social Science Research carried out during the mid-seventies. The formation of the ICSSR itself, with the promotion of social science research as its main objective, helped considerably in the process of acceleration of research output.

### Social Science Research and Teaching

The large volume of useful information on different socio-economic aspects thrown up by research studies succeeded in exploding certain myths about Indian society. It also brought out evidence to question several theoretical propositions on the interrelationships among socio-economic variables and, in many cases, provided direction for formulating alternative propositions. All this advancement of knowledge has not, however, got adequately reflected in the teaching of social sciences. A manifold increase has taken place in the faculty and enrolment in social sciences in the ever increasing number of universities and colleges; and practically all university or university level institutions, numbering over 120 now, offer courses in most social sciences in their campuses and in numerous colleges affiliated to them. There are today over 1000 post-graduate departments in social science disciplines in the universities, colleges and institutions, and most of them have been established during the last few decades. In a large number of these institutions, particularly colleges located away from metropolitan centres, however, research activity is virtually non-existent. This is one reason why classroom teaching in social sciences has not been able to absorb the new information and findings generated by research. But the syllabi and text books in social sciences have also been slow in picking up new research findings due to various reasons. There seems a general inertia to change the contents of courses; most standard textbooks used are foreign and those written by Indian scholars also get patterned after them, with hardly any significant effort towards genuine indigenisation. And also, the research findings themselves are not always of such definitive nature as to get included easily in the syllabi, textbooks and classroom instructions.

The cleavage between research and teaching in social science seems to have been also accentuated to a certain extent by recent developments in the organisation of research necessitated by the need to augment research output in various socio-economic aspects of development. Earlier, most research work was carried out in the universities by their faculty engaged in teaching as well. Today, there are three major sectors in the field of social science research in India: universities, non-university research institutions and the Government. In recent years the university system, in general, has come under serious stresses and strains of various kinds, the most important being the overcrowding of the institutions of higher education. As a consequence, university research has got con-

financed primarily to the doctoral degree research, where again, the increasing numbers have started telling upon the quality. In any case, doctoral research has its constraints in terms of its capacity to deal with contemporary issues with the required degree of comprehensiveness. There is also a tendency on the part of the university community to look down upon research on topical and policy issues as 'inferior' to the more fundamental, philosophical and theoretical research. On the whole, the growth of university research in social sciences has not kept pace with expansion of the university system, and research themes have also generally ignored the swift pace of changes taking place in society.

A large part of social science research today is going on in organisations established either exclusively or mainly for conducting research. Most of these institutions of social science research have come up during the last two decades in the wake of the somewhat restrictive atmosphere of the university system for promotion of research on the one hand, and increasing realisation on the part of social scientists and policy makers of the increasing need for research on various aspects of economic development and social change taking place in the country on the other. These institutions have an advantage over the university system in terms of the time their members can devote to the research problem on hand and relative flexibility of the administrative procedures they follow. Of late, they seem to have scored over universities in terms of the research output and variety of research themes. Many of them receive regular assistance from the government, quite a few within the framework of the ICSSR; but all of them get most of their research funds from governments or their agencies. In view of the absence of regular teaching in their scope of activities, researches in these institutions do not get directly incorporated in class room instruction, except in a limited way and with a time lag after the research results get published.

The governmental research system has gone beyond data collection and occasional descriptive reports. Various departments of the Union and the State governments have their research wings undertaking regular and occasional studies on subjects of immediate interest to them, including those attempting internal evaluation of their schemes and programmes. It is presumed that such studies serve very useful purpose as inputs in policy formulation and implementation. Most of this research is, however, highly specific in scope and empirical in content, and is often for 'official use only'.

Therefore, its contribution and usefulness towards enriching social science disciplines in teaching and independent research is highly limited.

### The Foci of Social Science Research in the Context of Planned Development

It is significant to observe that the needs of policy and programme formulation, implementation and evaluation have led to increasing realisation of the importance of and greater responsiveness to social science research by the government and official agencies during the recent decades. It has been reflected in the governmental support to research institutions and research studies through financial assistance, organisation of discussions and seminars on government initiative on various themes of policy relevance and research interest with substantive participation from the social science academics and involvement of the social scientists, particularly economists, in policy and programme formulation either by way of appointment of academics in official positions or of consultations in formally constituted committees on various subjects. Particularly in the Union Government, practically every Ministry and Department has social scientists on its staff, most of whom have earlier been teachers or researchers in academic institutions for shorter or longer periods.

This encouraging trend notwithstanding, it would be unrealistic to assume that social science research is being directly used by the government. That is not possible; nor would it even be desirable from the viewpoint of a healthy growth of social sciences that research is undertaken primarily with policy measures in view. But a large part of research on socio-economic aspects of development results in conclusions with implications for development strategy and policy; and it is not always made use of by the government. A hiatus exists between research and policy formulation in so far as most of the research is ignored by the policy makers as 'academic', and to a certain extent the researchers also fight shy of working on issues of direct policy relevance; and findings of their researches are often too guarded and qualified to be directly useful to administrators and policy-makers. Unfortunately, it does not seem to have been adequately recognised that there is an inevitable and direct relationship between analytically sound scientific research and rational policy formulation; no research devoid of academic or analytical rigour could be good research, and any research cannot be useful for policy formulation without being good. The dichotomy between academic research and useful research is, therefore, false.

There are, no doubt, indications that such a realisation is developing among policy makers as well as social science researchers.

In India the processes of planned socio-economic development and of development of social sciences have gone together in the post-Independence period. Inevitably, therefore, the themes and content of social science research have been mostly related to the problem of socio-economic change. In fact, the basic objectives of planning, namely, rapid growth of the economy, self-reliance and social justice have been the main foci of social science research during the last three decades. Investigations into conditions accelerating growth of agriculture and industrial output, social and economic implications of the process of rapid industrialisation, relationship between social structure and growth in rural areas, spatial dimensions of development, role of political institutions, particularly at the grass roots level, in the process of planned socio-economic change, and demographic aspects of development are some of the major themes around which most social science research has centred. Obviously, all these themes were directly related with the pattern of development envisaged through the instrumentality of planning. The fact of planning as a vital aspect of India's economic system was easily recognised and accepted by social scientists and the themes of their research started to incorporate increasingly the dynamic element of socio-economic processes. Thus economic studies have now growth and change as their main foci as distinguished from the static aspect of stability and equilibrium emphasised earlier. The sociological studies of, say, the caste system, shifted from their ritual and formalistic aspects to the changing relativities accompanying efforts for planned social and economic development, and anthropologists' studies have shifted emphasis from the portrayal of typical characteristics of villages and tribes to their changing structure, power relationships and emerging stresses and tensions.

After about 20 years of planning, some time during the middle 1970's, the question of poverty and inequality despite the achievement of considerable growth in output, came up as the main themes of national debate on public policy and development strategy. The social scientists in India responded to these trends by concentrating on the equity and distributive aspects of development programmes. A large number of studies on poverty, income distribution aspects of new technology in agriculture, and of the emerging pattern of industrial growth, and on the problems of specially

disadvantaged groups were undertaken to highlight these aspects. At the same time, the issues of emerging social tensions on regional and communal lines were also becoming a source of anxiety to all, and social scientists' response to this situation was reflected in their research efforts to investigate into the historical, economic and social roots of such trends, on the basis of studies at a macro level as well as micro studies of specific occurrences.

Thus, the major themes of social science research have emerged as responses to questions posed by the policy and strategy of development the one hand, and emerging socio-economic and political trends on the other. The social scientists have mostly followed the lead given by developments taking place at the level of national policy making or in different aspects of social life. The lead-giving task of social science research has been rather limited.

#### **Ideological Parameters of Social Science Research**

It is not only that the research foci and themes have mostly followed the pattern of national concerns and priorities, the national ideology has also influenced social science research to a large extent in terms of certain basic postulates regarding political, economic and social parameters. The Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Indian Constitution on democracy, freedom, secularism, equality and social justice are accepted by mainstream social scientists in India as desirable goals; they are rarely questioned and are taken as given parameters of research on economic, social and political issues. Similarly, a system of planning to manage development is also generally accepted. Researchers may focus on the need for improvement and reorientation of the planning system, but rarely question its necessity and desirability. That the traditional social structure based on the caste system is unjust and needs to be changed in a more equitable direction; and that untouchability is a social evil and needs to be eradicated, are accepted values in social science research. Objective studies investigating into the causes of communal and regional tensions have harmony and national integrity as their ideological framework. Similarly, the need and desirability to modernise the social and economic structure of the country is implicit in most social science research, though there might be differences among social scientists as to what 'modernisation' should mean.

Thus, certain overall parameters of national ideology are explicitly or implicitly accepted by social

science researchers, with little or no serious questioning of their desirability. Even questioning of their feasibility has the exploration of means of achieving them as its implicit objective. The social scientists have, however, not always accepted the politically dominant ideology of the party in government in respect to the routes and strategies to achieve the national goals and priorities. It is difficult to recall any policy measure which did not evoke critical comments from social scientists. Though it may not necessarily be due to the dissenting voices of the social scientists, it is interesting to observe that most social and economic policy measures in India endeavour to strike a balance between extremes: ideology of industrialisation is pursued along with emphasis on agricultural and rural development, large scale industrialisation is sought to be counter-balanced by small sector development; positive discrimination in favour of minorities and disadvantaged groups is combined with efforts at integrated development; tribal development programmes are a mixture of preservationist and integrating measures; and public sector hegemony is intertwined with promotion of growth in private sector. Such attempts at balance may be the result of the compulsions of the objective conditions obtaining in the society and economy, but they do provide scope for debate, discussion and research on alternatives by social scientists.

#### Relative Roles of Social Science : The Primacy of Economics

The major concerns of India as a politically independent nation have been economic in nature: under-development, poverty and unemployment. It has been assumed that most social problems could also be tackled only with measures of economic development. Social scientists have, by and large, accepted these premises, notwithstanding some questioning of the validity of this 'deterministic' approach. Some evidence has been thrown up by sociological and anthropological studies to the effect that economic growth not only does not resolve all the problems but also leads to the emergence of new problems. Yet the overall priority to economic growth has been recognised, and resolution of old and new problems is mainly sought within the economic domain, by varying the pattern of growth.

It is inevitable, therefore, that Economics attained the major importance in terms of relevance to the problems of Indian society. Among various social sciences, Economics had the fastest expansion in terms of teaching facilities, faculty and enrolment, as well as priorities and resources available for research. Economics would account for almost one-third of the total univer-

sity and college faculty and enrolment in the seven major disciplines recognised as social sciences by the ICSSR and the University Grants Commission. The research studies sponsored and financially supported by important national agencies like the Planning Commission are almost all economic themes, and even of those supported by the ICSSR which deals with all the social sciences, a substantial proportion is in the subject of Economics.

It is being increasingly realised, no doubt, that many of the important issues needing investigation (e.g. education, national integration) should be tackled in a thematic rather than disciplinary manner; and efforts are being made by institutions to study them on a trans-disciplinary basis, utilising the knowledge and expertise of scholars from different disciplines. Yet, since the university system follows in teaching the disciplinary division as generally recognised in Western social science, with little scope for inter-disciplinary interaction, such efforts often tend to suffer from the lack of analytical rigour. Thus, while disciplinary division is essential for specialisation and rigorous analysis of certain specific problems, it seems to prove inadequate in dealing with some of the important problems of the society. In fact, a view seems to be emerging that most of the crucial problems facing the Indian society, even including slow growth of the economy, or dynamics of the caste system, which were considered to be exclusive domain of economists and sociologists respectively, are complex and not amenable to diagnosis, explanation and solution on the basis of a single discipline based analysis.

#### Issue of Indigenisation and Relevance

Researches in different social sciences have won wide recognition both on account of the new information they have provided on the socio-economic processes in India and of the fresh insights and propositions they have advanced for their explanation. Most of them have begun with the dominant theories developed in the West, but in the process of investigation significant modifications have been introduced, sometimes, to an extent that the models look predominantly indigenous. Elaborately detailed specifications and significant modification of assumptions of the basically Western models of growth, have led to improved understanding of the growth process in a developing country, emphasising structural rather than purely linear nature of relationships between investment and output. Similarly, the uniqueness of the meaning of 'modernisation' has been convincingly questioned, emphasising the context-specific interpretation of the phenomenon and its processes.

Significant advances made in conceptual and interpretative aspects of research on specific social phenomena, however, do not add up to what may be termed as 'indigenous' theory of economic and social change. One wonders if such a theory is feasible or even desirable. Given at least a minimal universality of causations in socio-economic phenomena, the claim of indigenisation of a theory would very much depend on the meaning of the terms 'theory' as well as 'indigenisation'. The fact that certain concepts and propositions developed in a particular land due to its advantage of chronological precedence of educational and scientific development, does not necessarily make these concepts and propositions 'alien' in other lands. The framework of analysis, in terms of the number and relative importance of different variables, could and does differ with the objective socio-economic conditions of countries and regions, and also due to differing values of the systems to the extent study and research in social sciences can hardly be value-free. In this sense indigenisation could best be interpreted in terms of inclusion of locally relevant variables in the model or framework of analysis, their specifications to suit their local contents, and definition of the purpose and direction of research in conformity with the accepted value system. Indigenisation would thus imply 'relevance' in terms of the capability to explain, predict and prescribe in the specific national context. In this sense, social science research in India can be said to have achieved significant advance during the last few decades.

The social science community in India has, however, developed a healthy sense of dissatisfaction and inadequacy in terms of 'relevance' of their research efforts; and the process of introspection and self-examination is on. Several discussions have been organised in recent years to review the past and on-going research in social sciences in this perspective. The question as to how theoretical rigour and social relevance could be combined in research has been a concern of individual scholars and national bodies like the ICSSR. Reasons for a relatively slow process of synthesis lie partly within the educational and research system and partly in the nature of problems requiring research. First, teaching in social sciences is generally carried out in a manner which permits very very little fusion of theory and facts. In fact, the two aspects are taught in separate papers and with differently based material. For example, syllabi have separate papers on Principles of Economics or Principles of Sociology, and Indian Economics or Indian Social System. The contents of the former are theories

and propositions without any reference to facts and are mostly based on the standard British or American textbooks. The latter have a primarily descriptive and informative orientation, and here the Indian textbooks or sources provide the teaching material. The students hardly have an opportunity to relate one with the other, except in some advanced courses at the post-graduate level in a limited way.

Secondly, such of the social scientists who had an opportunity to learn to synthesise theory and facts had it mostly in the institutions abroad; and such training, though generally useful, had the handicap of having been based on an alien empirical environment. Such Western trained scholars had the advantage of strong analytical rigour, but in the absence of adequate empirical understanding of the Indian situation, it took some time before their research efforts at home could go beyond mere marginal manipulation of Western concepts to accommodate Indian data, to the building up of new theoretical constructs suitable to the needs of the Indian empirical context. Third, socio-economic changes have been too swift in post-Independence India to allow time to shift the focus of social enquiry from 'what' to 'why'. Therefore, a large part of research has tended to be descriptive, throwing up useful information, but has fallen short of developing explanatory frameworks, due to the highly complex and dynamic nature of the processes under study. While it is relatively easy to comprehend and analyse a static or a linearly changing situation, a situation of rapid structural changes in social relations requires a truly dynamic framework of analysis which is difficult to develop. After all, the changes taking place in developing countries like India involve not just growth or a transition but a transformation, and that renders the task of the social scientists really difficult.

These limitations notwithstanding, Indian social science has developed capabilities, as a result of extensive and intensive developments during the last three decades, to deal with the emerging problems of economy and society, to the same extent as social scientists in any country are able to perform this task. What is significant is that the institutional capacity, support and recognition of social science research has increased manifold in a short period. The problems on the teaching front, however, remain, as pointed out earlier, and rectifying the situation by restructuring courses in social science disciplines and ensuring greater interaction between research and teaching, therefore, constitute an urgent and essential step for a balanced and fruitful development of social sciences in India.



**SOCIAL SCIENCE IN GLOBALISED  
INDIA : SOME NOTABLE TRENDS  
DURING LAST TWO DECADES**

**T.S. Papola**



**IASSI Conference**

on

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## **Social Science in Globalised India: Some Notable Trends during Last Two Decades\***

***T.S. Papola***

In a paper presented at the Conference of the Asian Association of Social Science Research Councils (AASREC) in Sydney in October 1983, I attempted a broad review of social science development in India. The themes covered in that paper included historical evolution of social science education and research, broad themes of social science research and their relationship with the changing contemporary social and economic concerns, methods and approaches used in research including disciplinary, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives, various actors and institutional categories involved in social science research, relevance and use of research for policy making, relative importance of different disciplines, funding of social science research, research-teaching interface, ideological perspective and parameters of social science research and the question of indigenisation of social science. That paper was published in December 1984 issue of the IASSI Quarterly Newsletter. As most of the issues raised and observations made in that paper, even though based on the situation obtaining two and half decades back, appear to be still relevant and deserving discussion, I have requested the organisers to circulate that paper among the participants in this Conference. What is attempted in this Note is to highlight the concerns and status under major themes covered in that paper and update them particularly keeping the context of globalisation that has been in process during the past two decades, in mind.

### **Highlights of the 1983 Paper**

Let me begin by recapitulating some of the major findings and observations reported in the 1983 AASREC paper.

- \* Rapid expansion of higher education and research system in the post-Independence period included similar expansion in teaching and research in social sciences also.

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\* Note for presentation at IAASI Conference on 'Social Science Research and Education: Trends and Issues', Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow, 6-7 November, 2009.



- \* Research themes in social sciences mostly flowed from the development perspectives and experiences generated by and in the process of development planning.
- \* Since the planning process was economy-centred, Economics gained primacy in social science research.
- \* There occurred a general decline in inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary perspective and approach as narrow specialisation and quantitative methods, inspired by American training and influence, gained ascendancy.
- \* There was an increasing realisation of the need for social science research from policy making arms of the government and research findings were utilised though not always very "visibly". Yet most research was seen as too "academic" to be of practical use.
- \* Yet, research even of the "academic" variety got encouragement and recognition, and founding of ICSSR reflected such encouragement and recognition, as direct funding from research using agencies was not available for such research.
- \* While ICSSR was seen and also succeeded in projecting itself as a public agency supporting and promoting independent research without necessarily tying it up with direct use, approach or ideology, it also contributed to the increasing cleavage between teaching and research in social sciences insofar as a major part of its support went to the establishment and running of non-university, non-teaching institutions.
- \* Social science research not only followed the patterns of national concerns and priorities in its foci and themes, it was also generally influenced by and accepted certain ideological parameters like democracy, freedom, secularism, equality, and social justice as enshrined in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution.
- \* Initial enthusiasm to critique western theories and concepts and evolve an indigenous framework for analysis, which was backed by serious logical and empirical exercises, gradually declined and it was generally accepted that while the scheme of variables and methodological details could be situation and

country-specific, an Indian theoretical framework as alternative to universally followed one, may neither be necessary nor feasible.

Let me now attempt a broad update of the experience and status as observed during the past two and a half decades, taking the above observations as the reference points

#### **Narrowing of Space for Social Sciences in Rapidly Expanding Higher Education System:**

The quantitative expansion of higher education system, which provides the basic source for development of social sciences, has taken place at a much faster rate during the last two and half decade than in the earlier years. In 1950-51, there were 27 universities, 370 general and 208 professional colleges; their numbers went up to 184, 4862 and 886 by 1990-91 and 350, 11698 and 5284 by 2005-06. The number of university level institutions is reported to have gone up to 450 by 2008-09. There are, however, changes in the composition of these institutions that have reduced the share and importance of social sciences in higher education. A large number of the new institutions have come up in the professional and technical fields. Many, and in fact majority of them in recent years, have been started by the private actors where again 'paying' and 'self-financing' courses have precedence and social sciences have limited scope for offering such courses. Research, in general and social science research, in particular, finds hardly any place in most of such new private and professional institutions. Thus it appears that the rapid expansion of higher education system in the new phase, starting with India's quest with globalisation, is marked by a narrowing down of space for social sciences in the institutions of higher education as well as the scope of research in social sciences in the higher education system. It may be noted that the 1983 paper saw a strong positive association between expansion in higher education and social science development during the first thirty years of Independence.

### **Declining Demand for Social Scientists and Social Science Research**

Similarly, the use of social sciences in development planning and policy which saw an upsurge during the first three decades after Independence seems to have declined. Development planning was seen as a complex process involving economic, social, political and spatial dimensions, for which it was necessary that inputs from different social sciences were used. In recent decades, the importance of planning itself has declined and whatever planning is practised is supposed to be market – centered, mostly involving linear rather than structural relationships (GDP growth can solve all problems, no need, to bother above structural and distributive aspects in development! Or at best, let growth be ‘inclusive’ i.e. let the poor also gain from it!). The role of social scientists and social science inputs is limited in such a policy environment.

Economists, who held the sway, even in the earlier context, now seem to be the lone social science community to be seen of relevance by policy makers. But even among them those conforming to official thinking are in demand, those with dissenting views are kept at a safe distance. Researches that justify official policy are referred to with approval while those critical of it are ignored. Usefulness of research is seen in terms of the support of the government action, not of constructive criticism which often tends to make powers that be rather ‘jittery’. This approach is not entirely new, it has been practiced all along, but the ‘preferred-entry’ policy of the earlier decades seems to have now given place to a ‘closed-door’ policy.

### **Questioning Mode on a Decline**

The new policy perspective and attitude towards social science research with different outlooks have also influenced the selection and treatment of research themes by researchers themselves. Thus the longer term structural issues are generally ignored while short-term causes and consequences of sporadic events and phenomena attract most attention. Concerns about poverty persist, but more research is done on how NREGA programmes are functioning than on how the high economic growth of the past decade is distributed. ‘Inclusive’ rather than ‘pro-poor’ growth becomes the rallying point for researchers because the former has replaced the latter in official development strategy. In a globalised world, it may look stupid to talk of ‘self-reliance’, but the long-term

sustainability of a growth that is led by export of services is not seriously examined. Nor is the sustainability of a growth pattern in which the services constitute 55 per cent of total production but 75 per cent of the consumption basket of the people consists of commodities; and, 56 per cent of the people engaged in agriculture produce only 17 per cent of national output thus resulting in an agriculture to non-agriculture per capita income ratio of 1:6, is questioned.

The function of social science research is to enhance the understanding of and critically analyse the pace and pattern of development and change. This task was performed by social scientists very credibly during the first three to four decades of Independence. The same cannot be said with confidence for the past two to three decades. Social scientists have not been able to explain contradictions in economic and social development that have emerged over the past decades. Growing socio-economic inequality, stickiness of caste labels and persistent dominance of primary relationships despite rapid changes towards 'modernisation', and increasingly extreme and violent forms that social conflicts have taken in recent years, have not found adequate explanation in social science research. In fact, not many social scientists have ventured to study these phenomena. There are more studies evaluating the processes and impacts of government programmes that are expected to alleviate poverty and backwardness than those attempting to identify social and economic causes and processes that result in and tend to perpetuate poverty, inequality and deprivation. Thus the studies, at best, point out the weaknesses in implementation as the cause of ineffectiveness of programmes, but do not examine whether the programmes really strike at the root of the problems.

#### **Increasing Commercialisation and Privatisation of Social Science Research**

Like all other aspects of society, social science research has also seen a sharp rise in commercial orientation and increasing role of private enterprise. Financial support for research has become more motivated by specific, short-term and often commercial concerns. General support for academic research for advancement of social sciences, and particularly support for institutional capacity building, has declined. Most research funding is project-based where the objective, scope and often even methodology is specified by the sponsors. And sponsors, irrespective of whether they are public

agencies, private foundations or international organisations, have their own agenda and goals that the researchers have to pursue. Increased use is made of 'tendering' or 'bidding' to award research projects, in which a scholar, an agency or institution with best research credentials need not necessarily be selected. And among the actors in research, a new breed of organisations, private consultancy companies, have emerged as an important addition to the previous three, namely, the universities, research institutions and government agencies — all supported by public funds and operating on a non-profit principle.

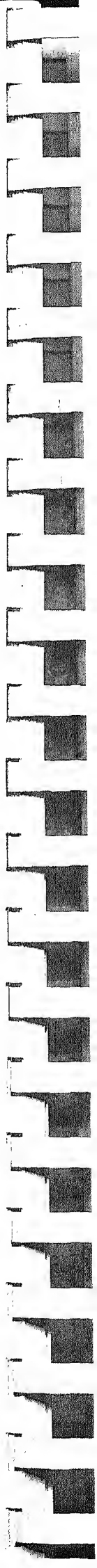
It is natural and perfectly justified for a funding agency to support or sponsor research that it could directly use to advance its goals. So a government department or ministry supports research that helps better formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in the areas in its jurisdiction. A private company gets researches carried out to increase its business and profits. Even so-called charitable endowments and foundations have specific objectives to achieve through research they support. The problem is not with the expansion of research in these categories as such. It lies in the shrinkage of funding for research that could enhance knowledge in all aspects of social science disciplines, so as to improve overall understanding of socio-economic development and its processes and which could also be used to upgrade the contents of teaching in social sciences. The cleavage between research and teaching that was noted to have taken place earlier because of the compartmentalisation of the two activities between different institutions and scholars, is bound to increase with the above trend in the nature of research funding and consequent composition of social science research.

#### **Future of Social Science Research: Role of ICSSR**

The trends described in above paragraphs obviously do not auger well for the future of social science research in the country. For healthy and balanced development of social sciences it is imperative that adequate space is available for independent and diversified research. In other words, there should be enough scope for the social scientists to be able to undertake research on the themes of their choice and with the scope and method they consider appropriate. That is possible only when adequate support is available for social science research that is not tied with any particular theme

or approach. Such support should consist both of the block financial assistance for institutional development and capacity building and for research projects and programmes proposed by individual or groups of social scientists.

It is in this context that the role of the Indian Council of Social Science Research becomes very crucial, as the apex body for promotion of social science research in the country. The Council needs to be strengthened in order to perform its role as the saviour of social science development in the country with greater support from social science community and the government. It is currently seen by the social science community as a government agency capable of providing patronage and by government as a sub-ordinate office of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It is in complete contrast with the perception in the first couple of decades of its inception when social science community looked at it as a body 'owned' by them and by government as an autonomous body to promote social science research that needed protection from its bureaucratic tyranny. ICSSR acted as a buffer between social scientists and the government ensuring autonomy and independence of research; and, social science community also stood by the Council to support it against any erosion in its autonomy. Such a positive and constructive relationship does not seem to prevail between the social scientists and ICSSR today. And it is necessary that this relationship is restored in the interest of development of independent social science research in India.



Draft Paper for limited circulation

**Analysis of On-going and completed Research  
Projects in Member-Institutions of IASSI  
(upto 2007)**

**Surendra K. Gupta  
Acting Member-Secretary  
Indian Association of Social  
Science Institutions (IASSI)  
New Delhi**





## Analysis of On-going and completed Research Projects in Member-Institutions of IASSI

Surendra K. Gupta  
Acting Member-Secretary

Under the charter, the IASSI is required to develop a spirit of cooperation among the social science related institutions in the matter of research. It has been felt in this regard that researchers could benefit enormously if they had knowledge of projects and researches, in their respective fields of interest, being carried out in other institutions, and capability to communicate with the institutions. Unnecessary overlaps could be avoided in consequence; the researchers could also check scope coverage, concepts and methodology and ensure that the individual efforts together could add to our understanding and to the stock of knowledge.

For moving in the above direction need has been felt for information related to area of specialization, the current areas of research, etc. from all the member institution. Thus the IASSI has undertaken to develop an information system.

The information system and data bank have capacity for answering queries v  
respect to-

- i) the projects which are going on anywhere in the country on g  
issues,
- ii) the projects which have been completed anywhere in the country c  
given issues,
- iii) the places and institutions where these projects are going on a  
names of principal investigators of the projects,
- iv) the places and institutions where projects have been comp!  
given issues and the names of associated principal investigators

Under this programme, IASSI started collecting information regarding on-going and completed research projects in various institutions of the country since 2003. Information regarding the research projects before 2003 was collected from Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) files. IASSI is collecting this information through a questionnaire which is mailed to all member-institutions every year, generally in the month of August/September. Information regarding research projects is also taken from the annual report of member-institutions.

The information collected has been classified into six major areas. The areas are Society related projects, Polity related projects, Economy related projects, Communication, Environment and others. Initially we concentrated on the first three areas namely Society related, Economy related and Polity related. The information on each of these broad areas was further classified into sub-areas and themes. In this paper an attempt has been made to present the analysis of the data collected upto 2007.

Before analyzing the projects, representation of member-institutions in different states has been done.

Statewise distribution of 290 member institutions and universities is shown in Table:1.

**Table - 1**  
**Statewise Distribution of Member-Institutions**

S. No.	States	No. of Member-institutions	% share of each state
1	Andhra Pradesh	20	6.9
2	Assam	7	2.4
3	Bihar	15	5.2
4	Chandigarh	3	1.0
5	Delhi	45	15.5
6	Goa	-	-
7	Gujarat	17	5.9
8	Haryana	6	2.1
9	Himachal Pradesh	5	1.7
10	Jammu and Kashmir	3	1.0
11	Karnataka	16	5.5
12	Kerala	15	5.2
13	Madhya Pradesh	13	4.5
14	Maharashtra	37	12.8
15	North-East State	9	3.1
16	Orissa	6	2.1
17	Panjab	3	1.0
18	Rajasthan	9	3.1
19	Tamil Nadu	20	6.9
20	Uttar Pradesh	25	8.6
21	West Bengal	16	5.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table: 2

Regionwise Distribution of Member Institutions

	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
North Region	99	34.1
Western Region	67	23.1
Southern Region	71	24.5
Eastern Region	44	15.2
North-Eastern	<u>9</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Total	<u>290</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Maximum number of institutions are from Delhi (45) followed by Maharashtra. In fact in Maharashtra, the highest number is from Mumbai. Uttar Pradesh with 25 member institutions ranks third, whereas Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu with 20 members each are both at fourth place.

Regionwise distributions show that about one third member institutions are from Northern region. One fourth each are from Southern (24.5%) and Western region (23.1%). North-east with only 9 institutions are last represented. The representation of eastern region mainly from Patna is fifteen percent.

Analysis of Research Projects

The paper is based on the analysis of 4335 research projects upto 2007 classified into Society related, Economy related and Polity related. Some of the projects are as old as 1979. The distribution of projects in each of the three categories is given below.

	<u>No. of Project</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Economy related	2018	46.55
Society related	1849	42.65
Polity related	<u>468</u>	<u>10.80</u>
Total	<u>4335</u>	<u>100.00</u>

As it is clear from the above data that maximum member of projects are economy related followed by Society related. Number of polity related projects is only 11 percent.

**Statewise distribution of projects is given in Table-3.**

Statewise distribution reveals that about one third of the total studies are from Delhi followed by Maharashtra (only 11.4%). Gujarat with 8.4 percent studies comes third and Andhra Pradesh ranks fourth with 7.45 percent studies. West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh with 6.9 and 6.8 percent studies are next in line. In the rest of the states the number of research projects undertaken is less than five percent. Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya and Punjab are the states where the number of research projects is less than one percent. In fact the number of member-institutions from these states is not more than five.

In the society related study area more than 30 percent of the projects are from the institutions in Delhi followed by 14 percent from Maharashtra. Both these states taken together have undertaken 45 percent of the projects in this area. West Bengal with 9 percent of the projects comes third followed by Gujarat (6.6%) and Uttar Pradesh (5.9%) while the proportion of other states is less than five percent.

Institutions from Delhi with more than 30 percent of the projects in economy related study area ranks at the top followed by 12 percent from the institutions in Gujarat. Andhra Pradesh with 9.5 percent of the studies in this area comes third, whereas Maharashtra with nine percent studies is at the fourth place. With eight

percent of the studies in this area Uttar Pradesh comes next. In other states the number of studies in this area is less than five percent.

About 48 percent of the total studies in Polity related study area have been undertaken by the institutions in Delhi, Maharashtra with 11 percent of the studies comes next. Andhra Pradesh with 7 percent of the studies is at the third place followed by Uttar Pradesh (5.34%).

Thus, Delhi has the highest number of projects in all three areas, namely society related, economy related and polity related. Delhi with 45 member institutions also ranks first. The number of projects in a state thus depends on the number of member-institutions from that state.

There are a few states where the number of society related projects is more than in economy and polity related areas. The states are Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa and Panjab. Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Tamil Nadu are the states where the projects in economy and society related are more or less equal. In Meghalaya, 9 out of 10 projects are society related. There are no projects that are economy related in Meghalaya.

## **Society Related Projects**

Society related projects have been classified in seven major areas namely (i) Socio-economic studies, (ii) Social Problems, (iii) Studies of Communities, (iv) Study of Groups, (v) Demographic Studies, (vi) Communication, Development and Management Studies and others. Statewise number of studies in each of these areas is shown in table 2.

One third of the total studies are socio-economic related. Studies of communities and groups together come to 30 percent. 10 percent of the studies are on some aspect of demography. 11 percent are social problems related studies. Only 9 percent of the studies have covered the field of communication, Development and Management.

### **i) Socio-economic Studies**

About 45 percent of the Socio-economic studies have been done in Maharashtra and Delhi. Gujarat with 10 percent of the studies in this area comes next. In other states the number of studies in this area is less than 10 percent. With 34 percent of the studies on communities and groups Delhi again tops the list and Maharashtra with 15 percent studies is next.

The highest number of studies in the Socio-economic area are education related (41%) followed by Health and Nutrition Studies (35%). Eight percent of the studies are culture related and another 6.5 percent are religion based. In other areas the number of studies are negligible.

More than 77 percent of the studies in the education related area have been done in five states namely Delhi (70), Gujarat (40), Bihar (29), Maharashtra (26) and Uttar Pradesh (20). Fifty nine percent of the total students in Health and Nutrition have been undertaken by the institutions of Delhi and Maharashtra. Institutions of



Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka taken together constitute 22 percent of the studies. In other states not much work has been done in this area.

ii) Social Problems

There are only seven areas under Social Problems which have covered two third of the studies. The areas are Violence (27), Aged (25), Drug (24), Social work related (16), Communalism (15), Housing (15), and Slums (15). The majority of these studies have been conducted by the institutions of Delhi and Maharashtra. In other areas the number of studies is negligible.

iii) Studies of Communities and Groups

About 70 percent of the studies in this area have been undertaken in six states namely Delhi (61), Maharashtra (40), Meghalaya (31), West Bengal (24), Kerala (21) and Orissa (19). 39 percent of the total studies of Muslim Communities (47), rural studies, urban studies and studies of scheduled castes (22).

More than 54 percent of the studies under groups have been done on women. About fifty percent of these studies have been done by the institutions in Delhi and Maharashtra. Child related studies with 29 percent are at number two. Most of these studies have also been undertaken by the institutions of Delhi, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. Number of studies on other groups is negligible.

iv) Demography

Among demographic studies, with 37 percent studies family planning is at the top following by demographic aspects (32.6%). About one fourth of the studies are migration related and one fifth are fertility related. Mortality related studies are negligible.

**Number of Themes and number of Projects in  
some of the economy related area**

S. No.	Sub-Area	No. of Themes	No. of Projects
1	Industry based studies	19	162
2	Agriculture research	9	156
3	Employment, Unemployment & Labour studies	20	146
4	Public Finance and Policy	12	120
5	Trade and Commerce	8	95
6	Management related studies	13	94
7	Women related studies	17	94
8	Water resource related studies	7	94
9	Technology related studies	10	77
10	Rural Development studies	5	60
11	Economic problem studies	4	59
12	Regional Level Planning Studies	6	50
13	Evaluation studies	3	50
14	Land related studies	4	50
15	Poverty related studies	4	4

Project wise distribution shows that industry based projects are the highest followed by agriculture and employment/unemployment related projects. Studies on public finance and policy are at number four.

## Summing Up

Highlights of the analysis have been summarized as follow:

- 1) Delhi with more than 15 percent share has the highest number of member-institutions followed by Maharashtra (12.8%).
- 2) More than one third of the member institutions are from the Northern region.
- 3) With more than 46 percent of the total projects included in the analysis economy related projects rank first, followed by society related projects (42.65%) only about 11 percent of the projects are polity related.
- 4) About one third of the total projects have been undertaken by the institutions of Delhi – Maharashtra with about 11 percent of the projects comes close second.
- 5) More than one third of the studies in society related projects are socio-economic studies, followed by studies of communities and groups (30 percent).
- 6) 39 percent of the studies in socio-economic area are education related and another 34 percent are on Health and Nutrition.
- 7) More than one fourth of the studies are the studies of communities and groups including women followed by 20 percent tribal studies.
- 8) Studies of finance and management with 15 percent have dominated the studies in economy related study area, followed by agriculture (12.5%) and industry related studies.
- 9) Highest number of projects in economy related study area are Industry based followed by agriculture and employment and unemployment.
- 10) There are states like Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa and Panjab when the number of society related projects are more than economy and polity related.

24 percent of the studies in this area have been done by the institutions in Delhi, followed by Kerala (12%). There are some states like Punjab, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, where no study has been undertaken in this area.

v) **Communication Development and Management Studies**

With 87 percent studies Development and Management related studies have dominated the studies in this area. With one third studies Delhi is at the top followed by Andhra Pradesh (13.4%).

In the category of others, 46 percent of the studies are on some aspects of History, another 20 percent are philosophical. Seventeen percent are behavioural studies.

Number of themes covered in different society related areas and the number of projects in some of the areas are given below:

**Table -11**  
**Number of Themes and No. of Projects**

S. No.	Study area	No. of themes	No. of projects
1	Education related	43	245
2	Women studies	34	145
3	Health and Nutrition	28	213
4	Children including girl child	24	77
5	Culture related	21	47
6	Development studies	21	92
7	Historical studies	21	47
8	Tribal studies	21	111
9	Demographic aspect	19	60
10	Study of Muslim Community	14	47
11	Slum related studies	14	15
12	Religious studies	13	39
13	Violence related	12	27
14	Management related studies	12	34
15	Migration studies	12	27

Most of the industry related studies have been conducted by the institutions in Delhi, Gujarat, Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The majority of the studies in the unorganized and informal sector have been done by institutions in Gujarat. Andhra Pradesh has taken the lead in the area of public sector studies. Delhi is at number two. In the non-farm sector studies Delhi has the maximum studies.

Institutions of Delhi and Gujarat have undertaken about 44 percent of the total studies in mining, forestry and livestock of the total studies on livestock and dairy. Forty percent of the total studies in the area of forestry have been undertaken by the institutions of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh.

Of the total studies in Finance and Management area, Public Finance and Policy with 34 percent studies have dominated this area. Trade and commerce studies together add to 32 percent. Management studies rank third.

#### Number of Themes and Number of Projects

The number of themes covered in each of the sub-areas alongwith the number of projects is shown in the following table:

Education related studies with 245 projects and 43 themes ranks first followed by women studies (34 themes and 145 projects). Health and Nutrition is another area where the number of projects is more than two hundred. More than one hundred projects in tribal studies have covered 21 themes. Development studies with 92 projects comes at fifth place. Other areas where number of projects are more than 50 are children studies and demographic studies.

### Economy Related Study Area

The economy related studies have been classified into ten major areas. The areas are poverty, development and planning, agriculture, industry, formal and informal sector, mining forestry and livestock, finance and management, employment unemployment, labour studies and others. Number of studies in each of these areas is shown in table No. 11. With 15 percent studies finances and management rank first, followed by agriculture and industry related studies (12.5% in each of these two areas). Other areas where ten percent of studies have been conducted are development and planning and employment/unemployment including labour studies. About four percent of the studies are in the area of mining, forestry and livestock. Only two percent of the studies are poverty related.

More than 62 percent of the total studies in poverty related area have been done in three states. The states are Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. There are 10 states including Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Punjab, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh where no study in this area has been undertaken.

About 53 percent of the studies in the area of development and planning are on rural and urban development. Thirty eight percent of these studies have been conducted by the institutions in Delhi. In rural development studies Gujarat with 20 percent studies have taken the lead followed by Delhi and Andhra Pradesh. Institutions in Delhi with two third of the studies have dominated urban development. Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have dominated the studies in the area of regional level development and planning.

About one third of the studies in the area of agriculture have been conducted by the institutions in Delhi. Other states where researches have been done in this area are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

**Table: 3**

**Statewise Distribution of Projects**

State/Broad Area	Society Related Area (%)		Economy Related Area (%)		Polity Related Area (%)		Total	(%)
	No.		No.		No.			
Andhra Pradesh	97	5.25	192	9.51	34	7.26	323	7.45
Assam	42	2.27	55	2.73	7	1.50	104	2.40
Bihar	81	4.38	48	2.38	19	4.06	148	3.41
Chandigarh	23	1.24	21	1.04	5	1.07	49	1.13
Goa	2	0.11	2	0.10	2	0.43	6	0.14
Gujarat	122	6.60	238	11.79	6	1.28	366	8.44
Haryana	2	0.11	5	0.25	3	0.64	10	0.23
Himachal Pradesh	14	0.76	13	0.64	0	0.00	27	0.62
Jammu and Kashmir	4	0.22	7	0.35	2	0.43	13	0.30
Karnataka	80	4.33	64	3.17	9	1.92	153	3.53
Kerala	90	4.87	105	5.20	4	0.85	199	4.59
Madhya Pradesh	26	1.41	15	0.74	7	1.50	48	1.11
Maharashtra	264	14.28	180	8.92	52	11.11	496	11.44
Meghalaya	9	0.49	1	0.05	0	0.00	10	0.23
New Delhi	558	30.18	616	30.53	223	47.65	1397	32.23
Orissa	52	2.81	40	1.98	5	1.07	97	2.24
Punjab	2	0.11	0	0.00	21	4.49	23	0.53
Rajasthan	20	1.08	61	3.02	0	0.00	81	1.87
Tamil Nadu	90	4.87	90	4.46	7	1.50	187	4.31
Uttar Pradesh	110	5.95	162	8.03	25	5.34	297	6.85
West Bengal	161	8.71	103	5.10	37	7.91	301	6.94
Total	1849	100.00	2018	100.00	468	100.00	4335	100.00



Table: 4

## Statewise Distribution of Society Related Projects

State/Major Area	Socio-Economic Studies	Social Problem	Studies of Communities & Groups	Demographic Studies	Communication, Development and Management Studies	Others	Total
State/Major Area	25	10	21	15	21	5	97
Andhra Pradesh	7	3	16	10	6	0	42
Assam	36	7	18	13	1	6	81
Bihar	5	1	3	12	2	0	23
Chandigarh	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Goa	66	10	16	12	16	2	122
Gujarat	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Haryana	4	0	1	0	1	8	14
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
Jammu and Kashmir	34	2	18	16	4	6	80
Karnataka	21	10	30	22	7	0	90
Kerala	5	4	17	0	0	0	26
Madhya Pradesh	108	39	82	16	12	7	264
Maharashtra	2	3	2	0	0	2	9
Meghalaya	172	76	184	45	54	27	558
New Delhi	7	6	34	2	3	0	52
Orissa	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Punjab	4	2	6	0	7	1	20
Rajasthan	40	11	19	3	10	7	90
Tamil Nadu	39	9	31	14	9	8	110
Uttar Pradesh	50	18	50	8	15	20	161
West Bengal	628	211	552	188	169	101	1849
Total	33.96	11.41	29.85	10.17	9.14	5.46	100.0
Perc. (%)							

**Table : 5**  
**Socio-Economic Studies**

State	Sub Area					Total
	Culture	Education	Health & Nutrition	Religious	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	0	7	16	0	2	25
Assam	0	2	4	0	1	7
Bihar	0	29	6	0	1	36
Chandigarh	0	2	3	0	0	5
Goa	0	0	1	0	0	1
Gujarat	1	44	19	1	1	66
Haryana	0	1	0	0	0	1
Himachal Pradesh	1	1	0	0	2	4
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	0	11	11	10	2	34
Kerala	1	6	8	1	5	21
Madhya Pradesh	0	2	1	0	2	5
Maharashtra	6	26	63	4	9	108
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	2	2
New Delhi	9	70	61	5	27	172
Orissa	0	3	2	0	2	7
Punjab	0	0	0	1	0	1
Rajasthan	0	1	2	1	0	4
Tamil Nadu	9	10	7	7	7	40
Uttar Pradesh	10	20	4	1	4	39
West Bengal	10	10	5	8	17	50
Total	47	245	213	39	84	628

**Table : 6**  
**Social Problem**

State	Sub Area				Total
	Aged	Rehabilitation	Violence	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	0	4	0	6	10
Assam	0	1	1	1	3
Bihar	0	1	0	6	7
Chandigarh	0	0	0	1	1
Goa	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	0	2	0	8	10
Haryana	0	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	0	0	0	2	2
Kerala	4	0	2	4	10
Madhya Pradesh	0	1	0	3	4
Maharashtra	3	9	0	27	39
Meghalaya	0	0	0	3	3
New Delhi	9	4	22	41	76
Orissa	0	2	0	4	6
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	0	0	2	2
Tamil Nadu	2	0	0	9	11
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	1	7	9
West Bengal	7	0	1	10	18
Total	26	24	27	134	211

**Table : 7**  
**Studies of Communities & Groups**

State	Sub Area							Total
	Muslim community	Muslim Edu.	Tribal	Urban	Children	Women	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	0	1	3	0	7	7	3	21
Assam	1	1	6	1	1	1	5	16
Bihar	0	1	8	2	2	2	3	18
Chandigarh	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	0	3	2	1	1	6	3	16
Haryana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Jammu and Kashmir	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Karnataka	0	1	2	0	1	12	2	18
Kerala	0	12	3	1	2	6	6	30
Madhya Pradesh	1	3	4	0	1	3	5	17
Maharashtra	11	3	19	5	11	24	9	82
Meghalaya	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
New Delhi	30	8	21	15	23	47	40	184
Orissa	0	3	14	0	7	8	2	34
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Rajasthan	0	0	0	1	0	4	1	6
Tamil Nadu	1	1	8	1	1	4	3	19
Uttar Pradesh	0	1	2	9	12	5	2	31
West Bengal	0	2	17	2	8	15	6	50
Total	47	41	111	38	77	145	93	552

**Table : 8**  
**Demographic Studies**

State	Sub Area			Total
	Demographic	Family planning	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	8	3	4	15
Assam	5	1	4	10
Bihar	0	10	3	13
Chandigarh	3	8	1	12
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	1	3	8	12
Haryana	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	1	10	5	16
Kerala	4	8	10	22
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	5	8	3	16
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	25	12	8	45
Orissa	0	0	2	2
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	0	1	2	3
Uttar Pradesh	3	4	7	14
West Bengal	5	0	3	8
Total	60	68	60	188

**Table : 9**  
**Communication, Development and Management studies**

State	Sub Area			Total
	Development	Management	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	14	4	3	21
Assam	5	0	1	6
Bihar	0	0	1	1
Chandigarh	1	0	1	2
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	10	4	2	16
Haryana	1	0	0	1
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	4	0	0	4
Kerala	7	0	0	7
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	5	3	4	12
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	32	7	15	54
Orissa	3	0	0	3
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	6	1	7
Tamil Nadu	6	2	2	10
Uttar Pradesh	3	1	5	9
West Bengal	1	7	7	15
Total	92	34	43	169

Table : 10  
Others

State	Sub Area				Total
	Historical	Philosophical	Psychology/ behavioural	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	4	1	5
Assam	0	0	0	0	0
Bihar	2	0	2	2	6
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0
Goa	1	0	0	0	1
Gujarat	0	0	2	0	2
Haryana	0	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	4	3	0	1	8
Jammu and Kashmir	1	0	0	0	1
Karnataka	2	2	0	2	6
Kerala	0	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	6	0	1	0	7
Meghalaya	2	0	0	0	2
New Delhi	12	11	1	3	27
Orissa	0	0	0	0	0
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	0	0	1	1
Tamil Nadu	0	3	2	2	7
Uttar Pradesh	5	0	1	2	8
West Bengal	12	1	4	3	20
Total	47	20	17	17	101

**Table: 12**  
**Economy related study**

State	Major Area									Total
	Poverty related studies	Development and planning studies	Agriculture related studies	Industry related studies	Formal & Informal sector studies	Mining, Forestry, Livestock etc.	Finance and management related study	Employment/ Unemployment /Labour studies	Others	
Andhra Pradesh	9	24	21	19	19	5	14	20	61	192
Assam	1	3	8	6	1	2	0	5	29	55
Bihar	1	7	7	2	2	0	4	4	21	48
Chandigarh	1	3	3	2	0	0	2	6	4	21
Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Gujarat	7	22	22	36	16	15	46	9	65	238
Haryana	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	5
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	4	2	1	0	2	1	3	13
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	7
Karnataka	4	8	6	7	7	2	12	4	14	64
Kerala	2	7	7	25	11	8	7	12	26	105
Madhya Pradesh	0	1	7	2	0	0	2	1	2	15
Maharashtra	2	15	21	17	7	6	15	20	77	180
Meghalaya	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
New Delhi	11	59	79	71	26	17	139	51	163	616
Orissa	0	7	1	8	3	4	5	3	9	40
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	4	4	14	10	1	1	7	6	14	61
Tamil Nadu	0	7	13	11	6	3	11	8	31	90
Uttar Pradesh	3	26	29	12	6	7	9	50	20	162
West Bengal	0	7	10	20	4	2	15	3	42	103
Total	45	201	253	251	112	72	299	203	582	2018
Perc. (%)	2.23	9.96	12.54	12.44	5.55	3.57	14.82	10.06	28.84	100.0



**Table: 13**  
**Major area - Poverty related studies**

State	Sub Area Poverty
Andhra Pradesh	9
Assam	1
Bihar	1
Chandigarh	1
Goa	0
Gujarat	7
Haryana	0
Himachal Pradesh	0
Jammu and Kashmir	0
Karnataka	4
Kerala	2
Madhya Pradesh	0
Maharashtra	2
Meghalaya	0
New Delhi	11
Orissa	0
Punjab	0
Rajasthan	4
Tamil Nadu	0
Uttar Pradesh	3
West Bengal	0
Total	45

**Table: 14**  
**Major area - Development and planning studies**

State	Sub Area				
	Regional and below level development planning and policies	Aggregative development planning	Rural development	Urban development	Total
Andhra Pradesh	12	3	8	1	24
Assam	3	0	0	0	3
Bihar	1	1	4	1	7
Chandigarh	0	1	2	0	3
Goa	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	4	4	12	2	22
Haryana	0	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	3	2	3	0	8
Kerala	3	0	3	1	7
Madhya Pradesh	1	0	0	0	1
Maharashtra	5	0	5	5	15
Meghalaya	0	1	0	0	1
New Delhi	8	11	9	31	59
Orissa	1	2	4	0	7
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	1	0	2	1	4
Tamil Nadu	1	4	1	1	7
Uttar Pradesh	12	7	5	2	26
West Bengal	1	3	2	1	7
Total	56	39	60	46	201

**Table: 15**  
**Major area - Agriculture related studies**

State	Sub Area			
	Land tenancy, land use pattern, reclamation / development	Agriculture research,	Farm crops	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	18	0	21
Assam	0	4	4	8
Bihar	2	4	1	7
Chandigarh	0	3	0	3
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	1	17	4	22
Haryana	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	2	2	4
Jammu and Kashmir	1	0	0	1
Karnataka	1	5	0	6
Kerala	4	3	0	7
Madhya Pradesh	2	3	2	7
Maharashtra	6	12	3	21
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	7	53	19	79
Orissa	0	0	1	1
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	6	8	0	14
Tamil Nadu	3	5	5	13
Uttar Pradesh	15	13	1	29
West Bengal	3	6	1	10
Total	54	156	43	253

**Table: 16**  
**Major area - Industry related studies**

State	Sub Area			Total
	Industry	Technology	Productivity	
Andhra Pradesh	12	7	0	19
Assam	4	2	0	6
Bihar	1	0	1	2
Chandigarh	1	0	1	2
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	27	9	0	36
Haryana	1	0	0	1
Himachal Pradesh	0	2	0	2
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	6	1	0	7
Kerala	23	2	0	25
Madhya Pradesh	1	1	0	2
Maharashtra	11	6	0	17
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	30	32	9	71
Orissa	7	1	0	8
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	10	0	0	10
Tamil Nadu	8	3	0	11
Uttar Pradesh	7	4	1	12
West Bengal	13	7	0	20
Total	162	77	12	251

**Table: 17**  
**Major area - Formal & Informal sector studies**

State	Sub Area				
	Public sector / public enterprises	Non-farm sector	Unorganised/ informal sector	Others	Total
Andhra Pradesh	15	1	1	2	19
Assam	0	0	0	1	1
Bihar	0	1	1	0	2
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0
Goa	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	0	1	9	6	16
Haryana	1	0	0	1	2
Himachal Pradesh	1	0	0	0	1
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	1	4	0	2	7
Kerala	4	0	4	3	11
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	2	4	1	0	7
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	9	7	2	8	26
Orissa	1	1	1	0	3
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	1	0	0	1
Tamil Nadu	2	2	0	2	6
Uttar Pradesh	1	3	2	0	6
West Bengal	0	2	0	2	4
Total	37	27	21	27	112

**Table: 18**  
**Major area - Mining, Forestry, Livestock etc.**

State	Sub Area			
	Livestock and dairy	Forestry	Others	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	2	0	5
Assam	2	0	0	2
Bihar	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	10	3	2	15
Haryana	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Kerala	0	1	1	2
Madhya Pradesh	2	4	2	8
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Meghalaya	2	2	2	6
New Delhi	0	0	0	0
Orissa	5	6	6	17
Punjab	0	2	2	4
Rajasthan	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	1	0	0	1
Uttar Pradesh	0	3	0	3
West Bengal	0	6	1	7
Total	1	1	0	2
	26	30	16	72

**Table: 19**

**Major area - Finance and management related study**

State	Sub Area			
	Public Finance and Policy	Trade and commerce	Management	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2	1	11	14
Assam	0	0	0	0
Bihar	2	0	2	4
Chandigarh	0	2	0	2
Goa	0	1	0	1
Gujarat	12	13	21	46
Haryana	1	0	1	2
Himachal Pradesh	0	1	1	2
Jammu and Kashmir	0	6	0	6
Karnataka	5	0	7	12
Kerala	3	3	1	7
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Maharashtra	4	4	7	15
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	70	48	21	139
Orissa	3	0	2	5
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	1	3	3	7
Tamil Nadu	4	5	2	11
Uttar Pradesh	1	2	6	9
West Bengal	2	6	7	15
Total	110	95	94	299

Table: 20

**Major area - Employment/ Unemployment /Labour studies**

State	Sub Area			
	Employment/ unemployment, labour, market, manpower	Socio-economic and Working conditions of Labourers	Child labour studies	Total
Andhra Pradesh	12	5	3	20
Assam	5	0	0	5
Bihar	4	0	0	4
Chandigarh	2	4	0	6
Goa	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	6	0	3	9
Haryana	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	4	0	0	4
Kerala	11	1	0	12
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	1
Maharashtra	12	7	1	20
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	41	1	9	51
Orissa	1	1	1	3
Punjab	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	3	2	1	6
Tamil Nadu	6	0	2	8
Uttar Pradesh	25	9	16	50
West Bengal	2	1	0	3
Total	136	31	36	203



**Table: 21**  
**Major area - Others**

State	Sub Area							
	Quantitative study of economic problems	Economic	Evaluation	Water resource	Statistical / date base	Women	Others	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	3	8	15	3	18	14	61
Assam	0	2	5	3	7	2	10	29
Bihar	0	2	5	3	4	2	5	21
Chandigarh	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	4
Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Gujarat	5	0	8	21	7	7	17	65
Haryana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	3
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnataka	0	2	1	0	0	1	10	14
Kerala	3	3	4	0	9	5	2	26
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Maharashtra	3	8	3	9	5	12	37	77
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Delhi	29	26	14	12	19	22	41	163
Orissa	0	1	1	0	2	4	1	9
Punjab	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	0	0	9	1	4	0	14
Tamil Nadu	2	2	4	11	3	6	3	31
Uttar Pradesh	0	3	0	7	0	5	5	20
West Bengal	2	4	3	3	11	3	16	42
Total	44	59	56	94	71	94	164	582

**POLICY NEEDS FOR MAKING SOCIAL  
SCIENCES RELEVANT AND PURPOSEFUL  
(IASSI IN HOUSE NOTE)**



**IASSI Conference**  
on  
**Social Science Research and Education :  
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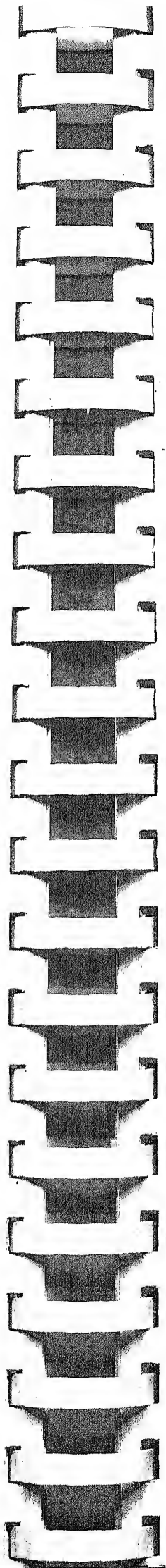


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# Policy Needs for Making Social Sciences Relevant and Purposeful

(IASSI in House Note)

## Prologue

In one meeting of the Executive Committee of the Indian Association of Social Science Institutions Late Prof. Ramlal Parikh, then Chancellor, Gujarat Vidyapith, urged the Association to work for getting a Social Science Policy Statement issued by Government. His suggestion arose from his feeling that the state of social science activity in the country was in a deplorable state and needed very strong support of Government for making it relevant, useful and purposeful. He illustrated in support for his suggestion the advances which the area of national science recorded after the adoption of the Science Policy resolution by Government immediately after independence.

The IASSI accepted the suggestion as part of its agenda of action. A colloquium on the subject was organized for discussion about the nuances of the issue. Among others, the colloquium suggested that the IASSI should evolve, through discussions in all parts of the country, (i) what should be the content of such a policy statement, (ii) how policies in this area could benefit society and (iii) what instrument would need to be formed for giving effect to the policies and present the ideas in the form of a memorandum to Government, holding out same as the collective suggestion of the community of social scientists in the country.

A number of seminars, workshops and other forms of meets were organized by the IASSI accordingly. Those were held all over the country and many social scientists participated in the discussions keeping in view the direction provided by the initial colloquium. Drafts of the memorandum to be submitted to Government and of the policy statement which the community of social scientists would like Government to consider have also been produced. The IASSI is now working for giving a final touch to the documents in a workshop.

The present paper summarizes the discussions at all the fora as a basis for the forthcoming workshop.

## Introduction

The Scientific Policy Resolution of the Government of India, 1958 envisaged a breakthrough in the research and education of sciences in the country; it also stimulated the idea of a welfare state, effective utilization of human and material resources for industrialization and also for improving education and training of scientific and technical personnel in a big way over the years. Educational facilities for sciences at the

universities have significantly diversified, new opportunities for researches have opened, and most importantly, India has emerged as a major scientific community.

The state of affairs with respect to education, research and training in the area of social sciences has, on the other hand, not shown signs of progress. A feeling has also developed, as expressed in various seminars and discussions, that social science activity in the country is becoming more and more irrelevant and purposeless. The need was felt for developing pressure for a social science policy that might help in reversing this trend.

The Indian Association of Social Science Institutions (IASSI) accordingly organized a Colloquium on Social Science Policy. A general discussion was held on the issues which should be addressed if an agenda for evolving a social science policy is adopted. The assembly highlighted the need for inducing discussions on the issues at many fora all over the country so that ideas may crystallize on the following aspects. There were:

- I. Social Science related inputs in growth and development of societies
- II. Need for such a policy
- III. Areas which need strengthening and improvement
- IV. Necessary areas which need Government intervention and support
- V. Instruments and Organs for implementing such a policy
- VI. Drafts of a memorandum and the policy statement.

It was also suggested that attempts should be made at the end of the discussion to produce a memorandum for submission to Government and also a draft of the policy statement as a collective idea of the community of social scientists.

#### **1. Social Science related inputs in Growth and Development of Societies**

On the basis of studies in the area of economics, growth and development in societies, have been associated, in recent years, with technological progress. This has entered into the structure of beliefs

among intellectuals all over the world.

Technological progress is a continuous process due to which societies achieve a steady growth situation. The core forming the process is constituted by discrete and isolated instances of innovations, whose occurrence is distributed unevenly over space and time. Each instance of innovation raises the productive ability i.e. output per man, of workers in particular activities. In effect, the process of technical progress, creates potentialities for increased output per man in different activities. There is nothing in this process which could be associated with realization of the potential in the form of a steady increase in the overall output per man in societies. Therefore, one is led to searches of additional features due to which the potentialities come to be realized in many societies with varying intensity.

For example, the Industrial revolution in Europe crystallized in the form of large factories in place of the earlier domestic production system. Tendencies for continuous increases in the size of the factories were also evident. International trade was opening up. Possibilities of export of products opened up which circumvented the limitation of the local market, and created conditions for unlimited growth of establishments. Along with this development, there also started developing varieties of new activities, which were not directly connected with the production process, i.e. transformation of input into products. These were, to name a few; marketing, storage and handling, transportation, sales promotion, auditing and accounting, management and administrative functions, training and human development etc. These also became parts of industrial activity and companies and establishments engaged appropriate persons for these jobs. Kendrick, in his study of Productivity Trends in the United States, has shown that the proportion of individuals doing such jobs in the manufacturing sector, has continuously increased. In 1900 these persons formed 10 percent of total employment in the manufacturing sector; in 1953 they constituted 22 percent (Appendix D, page 448).

Additional information is also available on this aspect in the report on World Economy produced by OECD (2003). The following table gives the data:

At the national level many new institutions were formed for regulating

**Table**  
 Structure of Employment in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom  
 and the United States, 1700-1998  
 (per cent of total employment)

		Netherlands	United Kingdom	United States
1700	Agriculture	40	56	n.a
	Industry	33	22	n.a
	Services	27	22	n.a
1820	Agriculture	43 <sup>a</sup>	37	70
	Industry	26 <sup>a</sup>	33	15
	Services	31 <sup>a</sup>	30	15
1890	Agriculture	36 <sup>b</sup>	16	38
	Industry	32 <sup>b</sup>	43	24
	Services	32 <sup>b</sup>	41	39
1998	Agriculture	3	2	3
	Industry	22	26	23
	Services	75	72	74

a) 1807; b) 1889

Source: The World Economy — A Millennial Perspective Table 2-24

and coordinating activities which were new: for example, institutions of banking and insurance, many forms of non-banking financial institutions, institutions related to savings, investment, and different forms of trade related (national and international) institutions. Besides, institutions related to education, research and training, political and law and order institutions, institutes for regulating and guiding structure of human behaviour were also formed.

All these activities were essential; most importantly, expansion of productive activities, with continuous improvement of labour productivity could never occur without parallel development of these new activities.

Colin Clark made a study of conditions of Economic Progress. In this study he examined a variety of data from both developed and developing countries. In this context he divided the economic activities in three segments - primary, manufacturing and services (these names occur in the second edition of the book). The service segment covered all activities which were not directly involved in transformation of physical inputs to products. These, in effect, are the ones mentioned above; the



new activities developed along with development of primary and manufacturing activities.

Colin Clark found from his analysis of data from many countries that as industrialization progressed the number engaged in agriculture tended to decline relative to numbers in manufacture, which in turn declined relative to the number in services (Clark, Chapter IX page 492). Relative decline in terms of employment in the primary and secondary sector, could be related to steady increase in output per man in these activities. The relative increase of employment in the services sector also went hand in hand with a steady increase of labour productivity in the sector so that there could be no ground for assuming increasing under employment as a basis for faster increase of employment in the services sector.

As a matter of fact, Colin Clark also found that high productivity in manufacture and high productivity in the services activity have gone together generally. This phenomena, i.e. the steady growth of labour productivity in the manufacturing sector witnessed in the developed countries could not follow from the discrete and isolated acts of innovation. This, therefore, could be associated with, and related to, the growth of the service sector, in terms of size and productivity, which occurred in parallel.

The service Sector included electricity generation and distribution, transportation, telephone and telegraph, water supply etc. Thus, a part of the employment in the services was constituted by technical manpower. In India, in 1991, these people constituted between 20-25 percent of the total. In the developed countries they might form a much lower percentage, due to a great deal of automation in these activities. The remaining activities under the service sector are highly manpower intensive. The increases in the labour productivities in these activities occurred, therefore, due to steady improvement in the quality of manpower. In particular, varieties of professions started developing for conduct of activities in these areas; for example marketing, advertising, banking, accountancy and auditing, communication and information management, management of various business aspects like funds and finances, capital, labour and labour welfare, training and human development, and similar others have emerged as new professions. The knowledge and skill component associated with these activities have been primarily social science related.

In effect, therefore, increasing labour productivity in the service



sector occurred due to increasing professionalization of activities in this area. The input of social sciences related knowledge and skill has also entered in larger quantities in manpower development processes associated with various activities under the service sector. One could also add, as a conclusion to the above discussion, that the prevailing process of steady increases in output per man in developed countries could occur due to steady increases in the use of social science related knowledge and skill in socio-economic affairs of the countries.

## **II. Need for a Social Science Policy**

In a general way, the social science and social progress could not be separated conceptually. But somehow the integrity which one finds in natural sciences is utterly missing in social science. Most Indian Universities do not even have a faculty of social sciences. There is no clear cut understanding as to the names of the disciplines which could come under social science.

Such confusions did not help develop an integrated study area of social science. Thus difficulty in finding out how progress in the area of social sciences could benefit society is not addressed adequately. Each individual discipline such as economics, political science, sociology etc. deal extensively, with the objective of their respective study areas. In these discussions, study of society as an aspect or an object is rarely emphasized with the result that a social science area with society as an object of study did not build up. Also sufficient knowledge and information related to matters of social concern did not develop in consequence, rendering the study of social sciences irrelevant in the country. The aspects which are causing the phenomena of irrelevance are discussed below:

Teaching, research and training - constitute the social science activity. For contrasting the Indian line of development of social science education, line of development in the advanced countries has also been presented under this section.

### **(a) Social Science Education in India**

In India European structure of education based on the University system was introduced in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. There were few universities in the country before independence; initially all disciplines under social sciences were not taught; moreover all the Universities did not offer all social science disciplines which were introduced in the country.

In the Universities and colleges courses were offered following

European traditions. There were two basic faculties of science and arts. The European approach towards education was also adopted. Science was taught as an empirical study with facilities for laboratory work and experiments. In the case of subjects under the arts faculty also, excluding language based courses, the European approach built on logical reasoning and theoretical work was introduced. Originally universities were largely affiliating universities and teaching was done in the affiliated colleges. These colleges provided education primarily at the graduate level. At some stage some universities opened up teaching facilities for post graduate education with a departmental structure. In most cases specialization was offered primarily at the post graduate level.

Core of the social science education as understood in common parlance is constituted by the subjects of economics, political science, sociology and public administration. In course of time many other subjects such as, social work, criminology, agricultural economics etc. were offered at the post graduate level in different universities. Many of these subjects were not taught at the graduate level.

Subjects offered at the first-degree level education have been in many cases different from the subjects offered at the postgraduate level. Thus, it was laid down under the rules that for taking a course at the post graduate level on a subject, individuals would require to have taken at the graduate level course on a particular subject; for example, at the graduate level, colleges offered in the past a course on economics which used to cover both economics and political science/political philosophy. Only at the post graduate level separate courses on economics and political science were offered. This type of arrangement prevailed in almost all subject areas.

In many cases particular subjects were offered only at the post graduate level, such as sociology, anthropology, public administration etc. These were not taught at the graduate level and therefore the entry at the post graduate level to these disciplines was open to all arts graduates. Subsequently many such courses which were earlier offered only at the post graduate level began to be offered at the graduate level. In many cases such subjects began to be taught also at the secondary and higher secondary level. In all these cases the contents of the programme which were given at the graduate level followed primarily the contents of the subjects offered at the post graduate level. Later, these began to be offered also at the school level. Contents continued to be the same as in the post graduate education. The difference was only in matters of details and complexities.

Progress of education of natural sciences followed a distinct line. Under the natural sciences initially only physics, chemistry, mathematics, botany, zoology, geology and geography were offered. In course of time many multidisciplinary courses began to be offered at the post graduate level. To a large extent these began to be introduced for meeting the needs of engineering and technology as these became increasingly dependent on theoretical principles which were the core of science studies in the universities. The result was development of various multidisciplinary application oriented courses under the science programme. This line of development has become now a continuous process with changes at the time in relevant and useful directions.

Progress in the area of social sciences did not follow the above path. The impulse which natural sciences received from engineering and technology were altogether missing in the case of social sciences. Activities in the societies which yield goods and services for benefit of society could be put in two classes. One relates to direct production of goods and services and involves processing inputs. The workers associated with such activities can be called production workers. The remaining workers also perform valuable activities so much so that the proportion of workers in these activities is steadily increasing in the developed countries.

Performance of activities in this segment needs skill, knowledge and information and the requirement increases as economic progress occurs. In the developed countries new professional areas of education and training are opening up regularly with impulses from this segment. Activities in this segment have not fully crystallized yet in India with the result that no impulses are sent out for the academic sector.

Progress in the area of social science education has taken two forms. First, diversification has occurred significantly. New subjects of education in the social science areas have been steadily introduced; fields of specialization have also diversified. The other form of progress has been the increase in the depth of specialization in each subject area.

Impulses for this line of progress have primarily come from the developed countries. Basically, the force of imitation has been the principal factor in this form of development. Thus new theories and area of discussion which enter into individual social science disciplines in the developed countries invariably find place in the discussion under the given discipline. This aspect has been highlighted in the Gulbenkian Report prepared by an International Commission headed by Immanuel Wallerstein, which spoke of the following characteristics of social science

programmes in the developing countries:

- a) Euro - centrism.
- b) Colonialization of Social Sciences.
- c) Cause and effect relationship and natural order with belief in universality of relations.
- d) Approach from monodisciplinary side of complex reality.

The report also highlights the neglect in studies and discussion of gender and depressed sections of the people in the societies.

### **Professionalization of Social Science Related Education in the Developed Countries**

Universities in Europe were set up initially by the church during the late middle ages. Broadly speaking, under the programme of Arts education, Universities offered courses in natural science, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy. Education was considered as acquisition of knowledge of ways the natural events progressed and how. Systematic work in these matters was initiated by the scholastic philosophers, the school men as they were called. Aristotelian logical system was used as the basic method for acquiring the knowledge. Under this system one began with a basic premise, or hypothesis or axioms and therefrom deduced the conclusions and knowledge by use of logical reasoning. The basic premises were taken as given and were products of speculation. These were not questionable under the system.

This methodology began to be used in all areas of education. Natural Sciences were also initially speculative. But with the works of Francis Bacon, subsequent works by Locke and other British empiricists, Descartes and other empirical workers, experimental methods dominated teaching and research in the areas of natural sciences.

Courses in the areas of social sciences entered the University programme very late. These courses continued to follow the old tradition of speculative work. Thus studies and research in this area became primarily theoretical. Methods were developed for empirical testing of the theoretical propositions which constituted the link of the theoretical work with phenomenal reality. Such programmes never produced knowledge which could be applied for handling day-to-day problems.

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Europe complemented this academic programme at the universities by other means for meeting the knowledge and skill demands of the

service sector. Institutions of guilds and trade associations had developed in Europe during the middle ages for taking care of the demands of skilled manpower for various technical activities. A system of apprenticeship training developed which helped replacement of the current workman stock by equally trained individuals, so that socio-economic activities could go on perpetually. These bodies also controlled the size of the workforce by regulating the entry into the occupations.

The industrial revolution changed the scenario altogether. Demand for skilled manpower increased phenomenally. Under the old institutional framework the new situation could not be met. Thus, the institutions in their old frame died.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe also created demands for more intensive knowledge and skill and diversified the demands extensively. In particular, as discussed earlier, demand for manpower for the service related activities with altogether new forms of capabilities, started increasing almost at the same rate as that for the technical manpower. As the universities remained tied to their earlier tradition Europe responded to the new situation in its own way. A variety of professional associations and institutes like Institute of Engineers, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Institute of Bankers, Institute of Cost Accountants, City and Guilds Societies and many professional societies evolved. It did not work like the earlier guilds. Instead, these involved themselves with setting educational and training standards and taking examinations for award of certificates and diplomas. In many cases, these also insisted on a period of job experience before taking the examination for the certificate and diploma. Coaching institutions also came up for giving courses related to the examinations. Generally as new professions developed new professional societies also developed for certification and improvement of professionals.

In USA, besides development of Societies, Community Colleges evolved for education and training of various occupations. Tie up of such colleges also developed with universities under which credits earned at the community colleges could be transferred for degree purposes. Universities also developed various social science related professional courses under their graduation studies programme.

Opportunities for education and training were provided not only to regular full time students but also to part time students. Opportunities also developed for continuing education programmes. With facilities for part time and continuing education programme, in the formal educational environment, the quality level of workers in the services activity achieved

steady improvement and this made possible steady increase in the output per man in these activities.

## **Character of Social Science Research in the Country**

### **(i) Research Agenda And Support System**

Empirical research in the social science area, particularly the survey-based research, is expensive, whereas there is an increasing realization that knowledge cannot progress without basic data and information. In the past, fieldwork was confined to anthropological and archaeological work, and for conducting and supporting work in these areas institutions like the Anthropological Survey of India and Archaeological Survey of India were established. Offices of Survey of India for making maps, and of Registrar General for population census work were also established.

With respect to other areas of social science research it was believed that facilities of a good library and proper documentation could be enough. After independence, when planning was introduced, the need for varieties of economic data arose. For meeting the needs, the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), the Department of Economic Affairs, the Economic Research Unit under the Reserve Bank, and offices of Economic Advisors under the Economic Ministries were formed. These agencies collected the necessary information for supporting economic administration and planning. The Ministry of Agriculture also supported a large number of Agro-Economic Research Centres for conducting farm management studies and estimation of cost of producing different crops.

The data collected by these agencies were also made public in suitable tabular form. In the area of economics a body of empirical research developed involving analysis of the data provided by these agencies. In the sociological area also some work in this direction was carried out. The work associated with published data did not involve further fieldwork and could be done sitting in-doors, aptly described as "armchair research".

The official agencies collect data and tabulate them primarily for meeting administrative needs. These are required for evaluating some official policies and programmes; for building up concrete programmes by the departments; and for further use like preparing official estimates of GDP. These data, in effect, did not emerge as a part of social science research endeavour, correlated with theoretical and analytical thinking of the sciences. Thus, further use of the data in academic framework is



very limited. Moreover, the data having been collected and tabulated for supporting administrative and planning related work fully enter into policy-making and evaluation. Therefore, the possibility was limited of subjecting the data to further analysis for gaining any additional policy-related insights. The result has been that most researches by social scientists based on such data have not been utilized.

Some money is spent by agencies like the UGC and ICSSR towards support of social science research. The UGC provides some money for supporting field surveys to the universities. Most expenditure of the ICSSR towards social science research is made up of grants to the institutes created under the ICSSR umbrella. These institutions obtain their basic grant from the ICSSR and the state governments. The amount of such grant available to each institute is barely sufficient for meeting its establishment needs leaving very little for researches involving field investigation.

Besides the ICSSR related institutes, there are many other institutes that are funded by various ministries and departments. Grants to these institutes are also barely sufficient for meeting establishment costs with very little funds available for field investigations. Thus all these institutes, including the ICSSR related ones, primarily involve in desk studies and additional analysis of data published by official agencies. By and large, therefore, the support available from public sources for social science research in the country is very meagre. Rarely provision for field-based-researches is made with the result that most studies concentrate on the analysis of published data. As has been mentioned earlier, such studies, in the Indian context where data are produced for official use, rarely produce additional insights to gain social significance.

Field survey based studies are, nevertheless, conducted in the research institutes and centres and such studies have acquired great significance in these institutes. The studies are commissioned by different national and international agencies including government departments. The commissioning bodies specify the objectives and foci of these studies. The studies commissioned by the government departments are largely for evaluation of programmes. In such cases the commissioning body specifies the aspects to be examined, and some times also the method of examination. The reports on these studies are presented to the sponsoring agencies and are rarely disseminated for public use. Strictly speaking, therefore, the endeavours associated with such studies rarely contribute to the existing stock of social science knowledge.

## **Methods and Techniques**

Empirical researches in social science areas take two forms. In one, attempts are made to prepare estimates of different magnitudes. In the other, individuals or households are distributed according to various characteristics. In cases where information is gathered on more than one characteristic of individuals/households cross-classification of the units is also done. In studies aimed at preparing estimates sample units are divided into various groups and estimates of the desired magnitudes are prepared for different groups.

Researches in the area of economics are largely focussed on preparing estimates of various magnitudes. Population distributions are also worked out and, in many cases, the percentage of the population exposed to given characteristics, like unemployment, is also worked out. In most other social science areas population distributions are worked out.

Researches in India are carried out at two levels—large-scale national surveys, and micro-level studies. Large-scale national surveys cover almost all dimensions of socio-economic life. Each such survey is repeated at periodic intervals and the estimates prepared on the basis of each survey are used for study of changes over time. Due to limitations of sample size the cross-classified tables are usually available only at the national level; at the state level, only estimates of characteristics are prepared.

India is a large country with wide variations. Geographical and physical characteristics, population composition, socio-economic features, political, social and economic institutions, and similar factors widely vary from one part of the country to the other. The national surveys, aiming primarily at obtaining aggregate estimates of different magnitudes, never bring out the correlates of these estimates and thus rendering the surveys of little analytical use. Mostly, such surveys are used for checking the effects of different policy measures.

At the other level, studies covering small regions — village, tehsil, block, district, urban centre etc. — are conducted routinely by research institutions, university centres, and departments. These studies also aim at producing estimates of magnitudes and population distribution by characteristics. Cross-classifications are also attempted taking into account multiple characteristics of individual units.

These studies generally have theoretical orientation: either hypotheses are tested, or attempts to develop new hypotheses are made. The studies

are usually directed by professional social scientists and, thus, a degree of rigour characterizes all these studies. Estimates of magnitudes and also various distributions are obtained through these studies. In many cases, estimates of statistical parameters like correlation coefficients and regression coefficients are developed. Significance of these coefficients is also tested rigorously using statistical techniques.

The environmental factors, which vary in intensity over the different parts of the country, affect the results of statistical investigation. For example, the geographical and soil characteristics influence the response of particular input complex on agricultural productivity. Similarly, characteristics of social and economic institutions in different regions affect the behavioural response of individuals. Thus, if studies similar to each other in all respects are conducted in different parts of the country a part of the variation in the results could be due to variation in the environmental factors. It could also be difficult to separate the effects of environmental factors in the overall variation in the results of the study. Because of this, results of individual studies lose social significance and applicability.

In a way, researches in social science areas in India in the present time do not generally satisfy basic objectives of research in any science. The results of researches should be expected to add to the stock of knowledge either in terms of information or insights. Secondly, results should be expected to be useful socially. Research is a costly affair and the expenses for it are borne by the society. Therefore, concern for a proportional social benefit should also be kept in mind. From both counts present-day social science activity in India might not pass as relevant and significant. In a way, the development is surprising

### **c) Training in the area of Social Sciences**

Education in the area of social sciences was directed for producing graduates either for teaching or for research. In these two areas of activities only knowledge and skill acquired at the colleges and universities could be directly used. Social science graduates also enter into other jobs which require direct input of knowledge and information related to social sciences. The communication capabilities - verbal and written - acquired in the colleges and universities are used extensively in these jobs. The job related skills and capabilities are acquired through on-the-job learning and experience.

Some social science disciplines require conduct of field surveys for collecting data and measurement. An extent of training is imparted

through research methodology programme for this part of activity. Some subjects like economics and psychology need analytical tools - mathematics, statistics and econometrics - for analysis of data. Special lecture/teaching programmes are arranged for imparting skills in these areas. In some cases a course of research methodology is given as part of M.Phil programme, taken as a pre Ph.D course. These programmes constituted, by and large, the part of training in the area of social sciences in the formal sector.

The earlier discussions pointed to the need for diversifying social science related educational programmes at the graduate level. This follows from varieties of services provision of which has become necessary for sustaining the rapidly improving technology in the production of goods and services in the modern economic activities. New institutions and specialized work arrangement are rapidly developing for dealing with sales, marketing, finance, publicity, advertisement, communication, storage, insurance, information processing, trading, etc. In the process new professions are emerging calling for formal education and training facilities.

In the conduct of activities in these areas skill and knowledge of a specialized sort are needed. As the scale of such activities increases new institutions and organizations are also formed which take care of service needs of many organizations. Various forms of networking and outsourcing arrangements are developed in the process.

In the developed countries universities and colleges have been offering varieties of job related courses for a long time. New courses are also developed and offered as and when requirements for particular skill and knowledge come up. In India a beginning has been made in this direction by the Delhi University at the first degree level.

The courses are necessarily professional and application oriented whereas programmes offered by the universities cannot be tailored to the needs of this or that company. In the technical educational area this problem is taken care of by adding a component of training under the course programme. All students are required to go for training in an establishment for a given period of time. The colleges make arrangements with the establishments for placement of students as trainees and oversee the arrangements at the establishments. The fresh graduates have further opportunities for training at industrial establishments for one year. The arrangements for training at this stage are looked after by Regional Boards of Training. During the period of this training the graduates

receive scholarship, the burden of which is borne by employers and the state.

The vocational programmes offered by the Delhi University at the first-degree level have been attracting a lot of students. This area of education, and also the activities which require the graduates of the programmes are only opening up. The activities are bound to develop in course of time providing opportunities for employment of right professional manpower. The academic bodies have, therefore, responsibilities for turning out appropriately trained and educated professional manpower who can meet the manpower demands both qualitatively and quantitatively. Arrangements for training, in line with the arrangements prevalent in the technical educational area, could be very necessary.

#### **Directions for strengthening and improvement of social science activity in India**

- The Bachelor of Arts and also Bachelor of Science and Commerce Programme should contain besides the traditional subjects, such as economics, sociology, political science etc. a variety of application oriented professional courses which are job related for meeting the demands of services. These courses should be terminal in the sense that other than training no further formal education need be taken for entering into a job.
- As part of each such course lectures on related theoretical subjects such as economics, political science, sociology etc. should be given to the extent of 20 to 25 percent of total lecture hours under the programme.
- The other components could be application oriented and delivered as professional courses. There are many economic and political institutions, (banks, insurance bodies, para-banking, organizations dealing with market research and market promotion, administrative bodies, political institutions, educational and training institutions and many similar bodies) which use social science related knowledge for better performance of activities in their respective areas. On analysis of the activities of these bodies and of the job characters, it could be possible to develop knowledge and skill modules for education and training in the colleges.
- In particular, the colleges should aim at meeting the social science related skill and knowledge needs of the establishments and organizations operating in the adjacent areas. Such modules could be



introduced as part of the graduate level programme under appropriate disciplines. In the United States, depending upon the content of knowledge in the modules, semester and trimester level courses are offered with different credit values.

- At the school level, in place of current social study courses, a course of study of society could be offered which would enlighten the students about the varieties of institutions (social, economic and political) operating in the society and the manner in which these work, and the objectives they serve.
- Each student should receive practical training through involvement in field studies which could be routine departmental work. The field studies could also offer opportunities for learning all stages of work associated with field research.
- Reports of such studies should generate information and therefore the results should be disseminated.
- There could be arrangements under which college faculty might work for a period in different organisations and establishments for going appreciation of social science related knowledge and skill used in the establishments.
- In line with the facilities accorded to engineering graduates, programmes for training of all graduates at appropriate establishments and organizations where skill and knowledge which the graduates acquired at the colleges are used could be developed. The training on the job could be provided for a given period, say, one year, and each graduate could avail of the opportunity.
- There could be arrangements under which college faculty might work for a period in different organizations and establishments for gaining appreciation of social science related knowledge and skill used in the establishments.
- There could also be arrangements for obtaining services of experts employed in establishments for teaching at the colleges.
- A reasonable allowance should be given to the trainees during the training period
- Half of the allowance should be borne by the establishments/ organizations so that they take interest in the training. The other half should be borne by government,
- For each professional category, the content of the training course should be laid down and arrangements for checking whether the content is rigorously followed should be made.

**Areas for State Intervention/Support:**

- Support in the form of an act of legislature could be necessary for proper implementation of programme of initial on the job training of the graduates.
- The character of reforms suggested above could need a great increase in annual expenditure of the colleges and universities. An increase of grants would, therefore, be necessary,
- Field research for training and generation of information is expensive. Adequate financial support for introducing field research as part of academic programme would be necessary,
- Under the suggested reforms holder of a degree in a discipline, like, economics would possess knowledge of theories and of a few application oriented subjects under the discipline out of a variety of such subjects offered under the discipline. All graduates might learn the same theories but they would be distinguished by the choice of application oriented subjects. Thus, it could be necessary to highlight under the desirable or minimum qualification for a job, the specializations in terms of subjects at the graduate level, by the Union and State Public Service Commissions.
- Autonomy should be accorded to degree colleges to open professional courses for meeting the needs of the regions served by the colleges.
- A period of training should be specified under each application oriented course and each college should have a training section for taking care of placement of students for training during the course duration.

**Instruments and institutions needed for ensuring steady improvement in social science activity in the country**

- Currently many institutions like universities, research institutions, professional associations and association of institutions like AIU and IASSI are involved in working for progress and development in Social Sciences, besides the public institutions such as UGC, ICSSR, ICAR and similar other bodies. These institutions would require to be strengthened and supported and brought together under a common platform (like a national council) for working together for the development of Social Sciences.
- The Council might deal with all such aspects as institution of multidisciplinary courses curriculum, and encouragement for openness in the teaching of Social Sciences; developing research priorities

with due regard to needs for a comprehensive data base in the country; encourage translation in regional language of classical works in the area of social sciences; work towards development of standards and techniques for aggregation, and comparability of research results and corresponding training; and work for bringing the neglected human group with the main line of discourses, and similar others. The Council might be allowed to work through various institutions which are working in the area, encourage new institutions and also form standing groups for dealing with such matters on a continuous basis.

- Such councils could also be formed in the states under the national level council with similar functions.
- An appropriate agency under the Government would need to be formed for linking the Council with the Government and providing support to the Council.
- An institution, parallel to the Board of Practical Training, working for coordination of training programmes of engineering graduates, engineering diploma holders and ITI graduates, could be formed at the Centre and the States for coordinating the proposed training programme of social science graduates.
- Most components of reforms lie on the Universities. Other than the few Central Universities, all universities are statutory bodies under the States. In the past each university had its statute while now attempts to bring all universities in a state under a single act are being made. Keeping the interest of coordinated development in view, it could be suggested that universities in all states should be brought under single state acts. Under such an arrangement, appropriate state bodies, with coverage of geographical or administrative areas, could be formed which, besides dealing with the finances of regional institutions, could possess powers to coordinate the academic activities under the institutions.





**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND  
EDUCATION IN SOCIAL CONTEXT :  
A NOTE**

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Hyderabad



**IASSI Conference**  
on  
**Social Science Research and Education :  
Trends and Issues**

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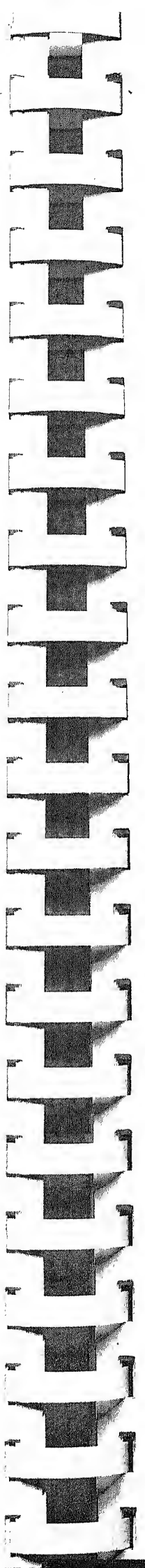


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## **Social Science Research and Education in Social Context: A note**

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Hyderabad – 500 046.**

Even after 60 years of independence, Indian society suffers from high incidence of poverty, mal nutrition, child labour unemployment, inequality, Social discrimination, gender discrimination, illiteracy and ignorance. About 20 per cent of the population, that is more than 20 crores of people suffer from acute poverty without two square meal per day. Although significant economic growth rates have registered in the Post-independence period, it did not lead to improvement in the living standards of masses to the desired extent due to the failure of Percolation Theories as the Socio-economic structure of the country remained to be inequitable and rigid. The forces which were found to be detrimental to growth with justice at the time of independence are remained to be intact to some extent even now. Although education has expanded significantly in terms of number of universities, students and teachers, only about 10 per cent of the people of the relevant age group have access to higher education in India while it is more than 50 per cent in case of industrial nations and more than 25 per cent in case of some of the developing economies. About 35 per cent of the Indian population remain to be illiterate and the rate of illiteracy is far higher in case socially disadvantaged sections such as dalits, tribes and women. Under these circumstances, it is obvious that social science research and education has to play very important role in resolving the problem being faced by the country and in transforming the socio-economic structure of the Indian society conducive for rapid economic development with justice. In this context, there is a need for examining the functioning of the existing social science research institutions and education and deficiencies, if any.

The ICSSR came into being in 1968 with a major objective of promoting social science research by extending necessary funding. It has 27 branches all over the country. The ICSSR was supposed to be autonomous body managed by the academic professionals although it was Government organization financed by Ministry of Human Resource Development. Many of the studies which probed into the working conditions of ICSSR pointed out that it faces several problems and its functioning is not satisfactory.

1. It faces severe resource crunch.
2. Its autonomy is being eroded.
3. Its management is dominated by non-academics.



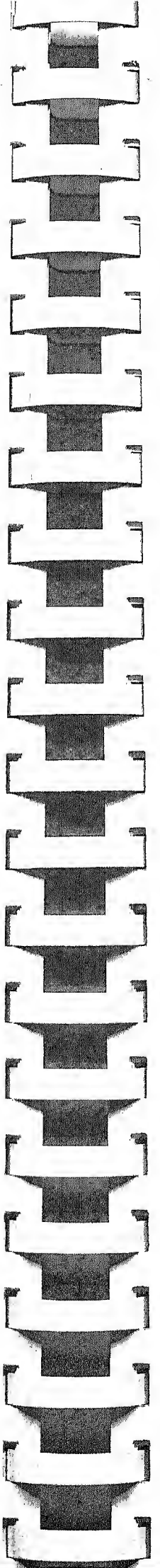
4. More than 50% of its resources are expended on its administrative costs while less than 40% was utilised for research.

Hence it requires immediate attention and remedial measures to be taken so that the objectives of ICSSR institutions are achieved. It is also pointed out by some studies, as far as, research conducted by ICSSR institutions good amount of work was published in Economics and economics continue to dominate other Social Sciences.

I also suggest the following for strengthening social science research and education in India.

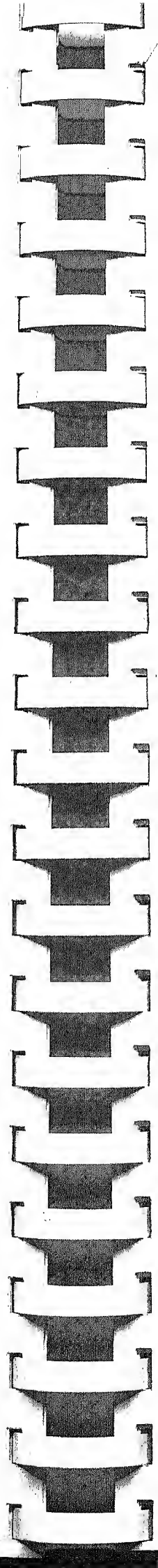
There is misconception that research institutions should concentrate on research while Universities are concentrating on teaching. Thus there is a divide between research institutions and universities. As a matter of fact, good amount of research comes from universities and research is complementary to teaching. Both should go hand in hand. Then only a teacher develops the spirit of enquiry and analytical skills at the same time he can expose the students to the latest developments. Of course proper balance of teaching work load and research work, including his/own research and research guidance, should be maintained in the University departments while assigning teaching work. The quality and standards in research and teaching should be maintained by adopting a system which can automatically take care of the deficiencies, if any, particularly in case of research degrees. The necessary funding should also be ensured by the research organisations and other funding agencies. Teachers, particularly young teachers should be encouraged to participate in academic seminars/conferences and refresher courses so that they are exposed to latest developments.

The social science research should also be promoted by undertaking the socio-economic problems of the society so that the research would be useful not only for scientific understanding of a particular problem, but also useful for policy making. The research should be relevant to the society. Then only the value and status of the social science research and education shall be enhanced. That is how applied research is more essential particularly in the case of developing economies although the importance of the theoretical research should not be underestimated. It is a matter of fact that Indian scholars could pay required attention to the very important problems of caste, social discrimination, gender discrimination, issues of Dalits and tribes, although some foreign social scientists conducted some studies in 50s and 60s. Still, Dalits in India suffer from social segregation in rural India and consequent economic deprivation even



after 60 years of Independence. Such problems should receive necessary attention of scholars. It is also to be noted that in the context of globalisation and privatisation, the students, particularly from upper strata are more attracted towards technical and professional education deserting social sciences. It is mostly Dalits/Tribes and other backward caste students who are concentrating in social sciences and the survival of social sciences largely depend on those social groups. Hence, social science research should pay required attention to the socio-economic problems of these social groups in particular and to the society in general. It is also essential that the social science education should become a part of technical and professional education from high school to University as technocrat or professional require thorough understanding of the society to use his knowledge effectively to resolve the problems of society.





# **SHORT NOTES ON INDIAN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE – SOME ISSUES OF METHODOLOGY**

**Yoginder K. Alagh**



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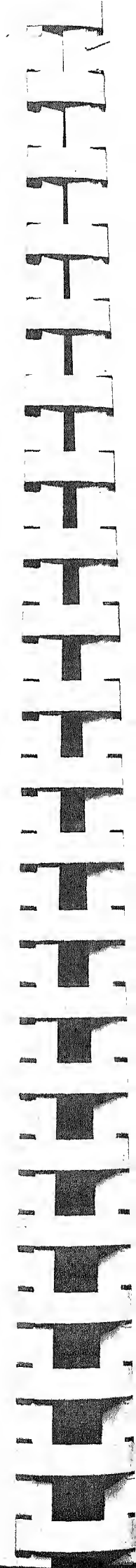


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## Short Notes on Indian Economic Structure

### **-Some Issues of Methodology-**

Yoginder K. Alagh

#### **Introduction**

In many distinctive Indian contributions, neo-classical and similar economics is made to stand on its head. India is a country and an economy on the make. It is poor and so there is intense concern for efficiency, for resources are scarce in terms of objectives. But since it is on the make, widespread growth overrides all. The method of reasoning of the economist is important and helpful. There is a quality of Indian reasoning which conventional minds find difficult to fathom. Referring to a point I had made, a popular daily editorially referred to it's origin as coming from an 'economics of sorts' The editor, a friend I knew was being tongue in cheek. But in fact he was both accurate and was paying a compliment. In this lecture I describe the foundations of some of my world view as an economist, but also the extent to which it is analytically different and not always listened to when presented but in retrospect, sometimes sets the agenda and was maybe useful but has always been enjoyable. Also ideas are accepted, but never always implemented, which is an interesting policy issue and another compliment.

An economist has a failing. S(he) works with a mind set, which enters his world all the time and try as I can I cant think of problems independently of that. A friend of mine could. The late V.N.Dandekar, would stay with me always and he was a great conversationalist, singer and raconteur and we would love those lingering evenings in Delhi, Rome, Ahmedabad or his home in Shivaji Park in Pune. But we would argue bitterly in meetings and seminars. He had this great quality of looking at problems in terms of their structure and not with a preconceived mind set. If it was poverty it was calories, if it was housing it was rooms, windows and land. I once told him in a Seminar in which he was being very cussed in terms of listening to an analytical point, "Sir you are a very brilliant man, but not a good economist." This is an article written by an economist and reviews his ideas on structural issues. The characteristic of these is that they are analytical and in many cases quantitative. They tend to carry structural understanding of the economy and policy alternatives. Many were ahead of the time and were controversial or side stepped when formulated, but accepted, at least in part later.

## Strategic Policy and Plan Models in the Liberalisation Phase

### Early Origins

Towards the mid eighties there was considerable discomfort in India with the then received plan models and awareness that newer tools of strategic policy making were required. The received models were of closed economies, prices were not a part, the intervention variables were largely quantitative and more generally behavioral relations were not a part of the arguments (See Yoginder.K.Alagh, 1991, Ch.4 for a description, more recently, Y.K.Alagh, 2008).

Fashionable at that time the Brettonwoods orthodoxy was a big bang structural reform. This consisted of abolition of quantitative controls, reduction of tariff rates, elimination of fiscal deficits and abolition of any special policies for employment and regional balance. There were four central rules, with some, corollaries, which we will ignore. The central rules were abolish all quantitative interventions in output investment and trade markets; introduce Tariffs instead and then reduce their levels and spread; abolish interventions in exchange markets; do not intervene for employment or regional development objectives. (See Mohsin Khan, IMF, 1990, for a concise and elegant testable statement of the rules). These rules were to be applied to all countries at all times, irrespective of size or initial conditions.

In fact Mohsin Khan, the Chief Economist of the IMF had given a presentation of the early versions of his paper at a Seminar organized by the BIDS at Dhaka and I was asked to write the story of Indian reform there, I understand later as a counterfactual. The Sri Lankan economist and policy maker, Lal Jayawardene was, a few months later, to describe my paper at this meeting as follows;

“At a Conference on Structural Adjustment Policies organized by WIDER, jointly with the UNDP and the World Bank, earlier this year at the Bangla Desh Institute of Development Studies in Dhaka, Dr.Yoginder.K.Alagh presented a paper and a framework of ideas which carried forward a view that a number of WIDER studies had proposed, namely that markets and policies have to be integrated into a plan incorporating social priorities. Dr. Alagh had argued at Dhaka that concepts like domestic and resource costs, effective rates of protection, and long range marginal cost could all be used to develop tariff, tax and dual pricing policies for priority sectors as a concomitant to a plan. He argued that it would not

be necessary to implement plans through quantitative allocation mechanisms. Professor Lance Taylor of M.I.T. who functions as the Research Adviser for the WIDER Project on Stabilization Experience and Medium Term Development Strategies, and was present at Dhaka, described Dr. Alagh's approach as leading to the construction of a socially relevant plan and prescription of policies for it." (Lal Jayawardene, 1991, p.v).

Given the large number of countries listed in Mohsin Khan's paper, which had accepted the IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programme, the reasoning was obviously influential. This was so even in countries which had not accepted the Programme like India. For example Montek Ahluwalia as Finance Secretary in July 1990, soon after the resignation of the Rajiv Gandhi Ministry was reported by the Financial Express (M.S. Ahluwalia, 1990) to have written a policy note which paraphrased the World Bank's analysis of policies for Indian industrialization (World Bank, 1989). But apart from the fact that countries like India held out, there was a contrary intellectual tradition, which was later to resurrect itself after the East Asian Crises when the Brettonwoods institutions were also to change their stance to a great extent. The dominant view in India was always a part of this latter tradition, although there was always debate around it.

India since the mid-seventies did not have a mercantilist or fixed exchange rate policy, with the rupee pegged to a basket of currencies, a reform introduced in the Indira Gandhi period. The floating of the Indian rupee by linking it with a basket of currencies goes back to the mid seventies, when controls on industry were relaxed, but such reform excluded monopoly and foreign companies and small firms were protected. In fact some commentators think of the mid Seventies as the break with earlier stagnation. Kaushik Basu argues this on the basis of an analysis of savings rates (K. Basu, 1997), as also the Canadian political economy commentator, (Baldev Raj Nayyar, 2007). Y.K. Alagh argued this on the basis of Savings rate, a break in Public investment stagnation from the mid Sixties and the beginning of monetary and industrial reform (Yoginder. K. Alagh, 1987, also see discussion of this in Vijay Joshi and I.M.D. Little,).

The Bretton Woods policies led to abortion of growth processes in many countries. Studies after the East Asian crises (See Aziz Iwan, and Jomo, K.S., 2000) reinforced the somewhat stark manner in which Gert Rosenthal described the lost decades of growth in Latin America and the Caribbean in his by now famous ECLA Reports (as a sample see ECLA, 1991). Similar experiences were recorded, for example for Africa (See Gerry Helleiner, 1986). These studies

and the more dramatic UNICEF descriptions of stunted generations, did not lead to dramatic questioning of the underlying paradigms. But there developed considerable interest in alternative ways of integration with the global economy. It is here that there was interest in India's experience.

In India, the mid- eighties saw the first transition from a regime with output, investment, technology and import control at the commodity level to a regime which would use fiscal and not quantitative controls. In 1985, India designed an extensive programme of reform emphasizing internal competition initially. In the mid eighties around two thirds of organized Indian industry was removed from price and quantitative controls to tax and tariff rate interventions. From firm level controls the economy moved to industry level interventions with strong schemes of incentives and disincentives. These would discriminate between industries, but not between firms. It is here that the Indians developed an alternate pattern. The policy framework was seen as a transitional regime, leading later in the early nineties to uniform and low tariff rates and freely convertible exchange rates.

As a part of the Indian reform process, an extensive set of studies; ( See Alagh, WIDER 1991) documented interesting problems, with serious consequences on output and employment in efficient industries and some important theoretical policy issues. A group that was set up under my supervision to work out a strategy of phasing out import substituting industries in the critical machinery and intermediates sectors, went about it conventionally by estimating the domestic resource cost of these industries and effective protection. Some industries were downright inefficient with DRC's between 4 to 6 and it was decided to phase out protection to them. These included, for example thermo plastics and some component and equipment items. At the other extreme there were a number of industries which were very competitive and they would need very little protection. These included textiles, steel, cement and some machinery items. But more than half of Indian industry fell in an interesting category. They were globally efficient in the sense that at international prices of outputs and inputs, they would make profits (  $DRC's < 1$  ), but at market prices they suffered losses. More intense work showed that in a partially reforming economy, if your input supplier has not been subjected to competition, even- if you are efficient, you will make losses, because your global competitor gets components and equipment at cheaper prices, or his interest costs are lower. The idea was that short run market prices may not always capture transitional adjustment costs. In addition to the phasing problem there was a harmonization problem in the sense that in a liberalizing economy



an efficient processor with DRCs less than one, could be financially unprofitable with respect to a competitor abroad if his domestic input suppliers get higher protection. *This was the negative protection case as measured for example for the Indian machine tool industry at that stage.* (For the econometric and analytical work in relation to this kind of policy mind set, See Y.K. Alagh, 1991). This was a powerful argument for sequencing reform. Clusters of interrelated industries would need to be reformed together and tariff policies would need to be determined in an optimal manner taking these configurations into account. The Indians were seen in some of the literature as following this path, sequencing and phasing their reform.

It is now recognized in the growth debate that India was growing reasonably fast in the Eighties, when it designed an extensive programme of reform emphasizing internal competition initially. In the mid eighties around two thirds of organized Indian industry was removed from price and quantitative controls to tax and tariff rate interventions. From firm level controls the economy moved to industry level interventions with strong schemes of incentives and disincentives. These would discriminate between industries, but not between firms. The policy framework was seen as a transitional regime, leading later to more general opening up of the economy. A group that was set up under my supervision to work out a strategy of phasing out import substituting industries discovered that around half of Indian industry was globally efficient in the sense that at international prices of outputs and inputs, firms would make profits ( $DRC's < 1$ ), but at market prices they suffered losses. In a partially reforming economy, if the input supplier has not been subjected to competition, even- if a firm is efficient, it will make losses, because the global competitor gets components and equipment at cheaper prices, or his interest rate is lower. Clusters of industries would need to be reformed together and tariff policies would need to be determined in an optimal manner taking these configurations into account. The Indians were seen in some of the literature as following this path, sequencing and phasing reform. According to the World Bank in 1992, "Policies that reward cost reduction and technical change and place pressures on domestic manufacturing to bring about such change would have to be implemented. Protected markets make enterprises soft and encourage obsolete technologies. Y. K. Alagh refers to a study of the Indian tire industry for the 1981-84 period where price increases were higher than increases in material costs, and the top four companies consistently maintained their share of production, while the technology used was obsolete." The Indian example was seen as a counterfactual. Lance Taylor (1994) in a fairly widely quoted paper described an MPS ( Multifaceted Price System ) as a "transition from an administered towards a market regime" and argued that the Indians



had switched industry successfully from firm level controls to an industry level efficiency policy, linked with economy level strategic objectives. By 1992, India moved away from this policy stance to that of a uniform tariff rate and reducing that rate.

In a distorting trade epoch which to an extent all depressions will be, it is possible to bring in policies of inverted tax structures in a measured and phased manner. These kinds of historical epochs in policy have contemporary relevance. India's budget papers, for the 2009/10 stimulus budget describe this policy as indirect tax rates compensating for 'deeper cuts on finished goods as compared to their raw materials'. Peak tariff rates, set by reform of the tax system are not changed, but tariff rates reduced on specified inputs, components and capital goods (GOI, 2009, p.36).

For the agricultural sector expert bodies like the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices, the Finance Ministry's Economic Adviser and a Committee I chaired on economic policies for a WTO trade dominated regime argue for variable tariff rates calibrated to protect the efficient Indian agricultural producer and a number of quantitatively worked out counterfactuals are available in the Indian policy literature (Y.K. Alagh, 2004). Such a policy would obviously raise revenues. The World Bank has advocated this policy for India as 'working a level playing field' (World Bank, 2008). The Government of India, however keeps its options open, both for giving it elbow room in the ongoing WTO negotiations and of keeping domestic food prices in control.

By this time the growth debilitating aspect of a Brettonwoods structural reform was documented showing negative growth for over a decade and alternatives models of globalisation were being discussed. The Indian example was seen as a counterfactual. Lance Taylor in a fairly widely quoted paper described an MPS (Multifaceted Price System) as a "transition from an administered towards a market regime." (L. Taylor, MIT, 1991, p.7.) He gave the Polish and Indian examples and said that "it's homely virtues are perhaps becoming more evident." (Ibid., p.7.) He also credited the Indians for transitional regimes "developing effective multi-tiered pricing systems for their nationalised firms and even in agriculture (Alagh, 1991)." (Taylor, Ibid., p.38 : the reference in Taylor here is to Y.K. Alagh, 1991, WIDER). Taylor in his review of the post socialist transition from a global development economics point of view was basically arguing that the Indians had switched industry successfully from firm level controls to an industry level efficiency policy, linked with

economy level strategic objectives. "The Theory of a Multi-Faceted Price System" advocated the Indian and the present authors perception that in the transitional stage, dual pricing, threat of imports and set-off could all be used, for limited periods of time, in such a policy regime. Policy then has a level playing objective, so that the transition to a global economy, is knowledge based and without avoidable human costs.

Later Robert Wade in his well known World Politics Paper on East Asia's Economic Success was to quote Indian perspectives on South Korea in his famous justification of 'strategic trade theory'. Wade begins and ends his paper with a reference to an Indian description of South Korea's policy perspectives in the early phases of industrialisation. ( See R. Wade, 1992, p.270 and p.320. )The reference by Wade to a South Korean perspective from Y. K. Alagh's view from South Asia in the Asian Development Bank's journal the Asian Development Review ( Y.K.Alagh, 1989 ) became a widely cited part of the strategic trade theory literature. Later, for example John Stopford was to place this experience in a larger strategic global political economy perspective and draw management implications for the global firm from it. ( J. Stopford, Carnegie Mellon, 1994, p.5 ). This was reported in a Working Paper of UNESCO's International Social Science Programme called MOST( Management of Social Transformation), which together with a paper by R.Ricupero got a certain amount of attention.(Yoginder.K.Alagh, 2000,?)

#### Global Perspectives after the Meltdown

It is interesting that when Stiglitz talked of counterfactuals that succeeded, and the theories that go with them he discussed Poland and China, while in the early Nineties the references as we have shown, were also to India. The somewhat laboured examples from Lance Taylor, Robert Wade and John Stopford are only to argue for an Indian perspective on the country's positioning in the reform process. In the second half of the nineties and the early part of this decade, Indian economists are well represented in global journals, but there is no perspective on India's experience from an analytical point of view. This is definitely unfortunate from a knowledge point of view and since knowledge we know is a source of growth and has practical consequences also.

The World seems again to be at another interesting turning point. Just like at the beginning of the decade of the nineties before Rio, there seems to be an air of questioning. The East Asian meltdown, the 2008 perfect storm, the new millennium and with other developments, there is an atmosphere of expectation from ideas. Stiglitz and Akerlof now talk of 'Let A Hundred Flowers Bloom' They argue that 'Just as the crisis has reinvigorated thinking about the need for regulation, so it has given new impetus to the exploration of alternative strands of thought that would provide better insights into how our complex economic system functions.' Stiglitz and Akerlof, 2009).

Why do such periods emerge? The work of earlier scholars on the uneven nature of development in the Eighties and early nineties did not lead to many questions. The East Asian meltdown did. (See Ricupero, 1999 for a description). This by itself is a phenomenon, which needs some exploration, as a manifestation of power and global discourse. It is not human misery but a disruption of global processes which leads to demands for change, even though an understanding of underdevelopment may be a requirement.

Past experience is also that such periods do not lead to gain for the developing world unless there is an attempt at improved understanding of the context in which they exist and even then genuine change is not easy. The statements on comprehensive development frameworks and partnerships are promising and anyway the developing world has no 'real options' to such dialogue. There are some very profound reasons to give content to such statements, deconstruct them as they were and rebuild them so they do not remain empty boxes. Partnerships require level playing fields and comprehensive frameworks, have to function at the cutting edge if they are not to degenerate into slogans. The argument we are building is that theory has to relate with the current nature of developments in industry and technology and with macro and trade questions. We also argue that the discourse has to be that of the quantum jumps from the angle of the developing world. However, it is set in incremental terms and this makes it basically unequal.

The Indians, for example, continue with a strategy of working for capital account convertibility of the rupee, since it is already convertible on current account. While the interest rate is declining, bringing it to global levels, through macro reform, faster export growth and a near doubling of exchange reserves, currently over \$250 billion are seen as the preconditions. A strategic view means that India is not willing to dilute the earlier objectives, now even when

global capital markets are under question. The interesting question, however, is that while the objective has been stated, there is very little solid work on the transitional regimes to achieve it. It is quite obvious that high interest rates are hurting India's competitiveness abroad, in the current context of a liberal trade regime. But these arguments are discussed in India in newspaper articles and unfortunately, there no academic studied discourse. On a more general level, any standard international trade textbook discusses the fact that you have limited degrees of policy freedom. The tradeoffs between monetary policy for investment for growth and employment on the one hand and price and exchange stability on the other are well known. ( See for example Paul Krugman and M.Obstfeld, 2000, Ch.22, on trillema's of the open economy ). It is reported that in a recent piece M. S. Ahluwalia has used open economy macro economy identities to show the investment depressing crowding out effects of fiscal deficits. One may or may not agree with this conclusion, but I have great admiration of Ahluwalia's ability to raise issues in an analytical context. In an earlier model Abhijit Sen had worked with crowding in identities in a Taylor model applied to India. ( See Sen's paper in L. Taylor,1988 ).

I developed these ideas for a model of he Indian economy for its plan.(Y.K.Alagh, 208)In this paper I had also argued that income distribution could be modeled since demand functions for the rich and poor were already available and also price responses of supply functions since LRMC pricing was a tradition as argued earlier. More recently I was told that such modeling would not be done, by the policy makers anymore. Sankhya Series A is much too theoretical a journal it was said and my paper was unfortunately for me was published there (this is the reason for giving the full reference in the text to the table above). For the current generation of policy makers the benefits of reform and nature of required policy changes are so obvious that it is not considered necessary to model policy choices anymore.

There is also little work on the employment and demand consequences of a more open economy. I have separately argued for more research on the employment consequences of areas showing high export and while I could collect considerable case study material, there was less of a macroeconomy nature. (see Y.K.Alagh, Presidential Address, Indian Society of Labour Economics, 1999 ). Also the relationship between income distribution and macro outcomes is considered uninteresting. I digress on India's reaction to Edmund Phelp's Nobel in the context of this World of Philistines..

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I reminisced on how as a young teacher at the University of Pennsylvania and at Swarthmore College we invited Phelps and he spun a fascinating story of how the wage earner and the profit maker kept on trying to get to terms with each other as the economy pushed to fuller utilisation of resources and the unstable outcomes which followed.

Monopolies, both of businesses and of trade unions, were the bees in his bonnet and an enlightened policy maker would push them to flexibility and prosperity. My teachers were to make me do the numbers and maths for it, but that economics is also about power and efficiency is important. The Indian discussion has not mentioned it, but I noted that Phelps also made serious contributions to mathematical growth theory. That the philistine masks power was a lesson I was to remember in the models my country asked me to make. I was twenty seven and came back home and am sixty seven years young now, but the fire still burns.

The pursuit of efficiency and justice is so powerful that India does not let it go and keeps on teaching lessons to those who would play with it. The period was of ferment on understanding the analytics of macro theory. Hicksian and Patinkin extension of Keynes and the Fisher Friedman contributions were leading to a deeper understanding of the asset spectrum and futures. In terms of tools, at the analytical level in the frontiers of understanding, there are in fact sometimes not that many differences. I once asked my then boss the late Sukhomoy Chakravarti why his monetary economics was so conservative, while his economics was radical. His eyebrows furrowed when he was under pressure. He told me that those who didn't do their sums right were never really going to help the poor. Economics at one level is about power, but at another it is about understanding. I may disagree with Shankar Acharya for example on his values, but admire his insights. Phelps was right there, I argued at the point Chakravarti was focusing on in the early Eighties and richly deserved the prize. I discovered that Stiglitz in one of his popular writings has also written on the Phelps Nobel in the same tone and also mentioned Okun, which I also did in the Tribune.

The Economics Nobel Prize to Edmund Phelps brings back old memories. Teaching economics at Wharton and the Economics Department at Penn and at Swarthmore College in the second half of the Sixties, serious and popular teachers in student ratings, with kindred souls we always complained that the Samuelson text was inadequate and circumscribing. Our seniors bridged the gap between practice, policy and theory. Lawrence Klein was then using the Wharton Model and was earlier hounded by Mcarthy and Sid Weintraub was a pioneer in

integrating micro with macro theory. They were sympathetic. Apart from getting more freedom to teach myself in a very large class with over twenty sections, we managed to get outstanding outsiders to speak to the entire class of almost a thousand. Phelps was a great hit. I made such a nuisance that my seniors asked me to follow him with economics made relevant to poor countries. This was the Kennedy golden age and there was a systematic attack on the position that Economics was only about efficiency and institutions and income distribution did not matter. The Samuelson text took a middle position. You don't sell a million copies, by taking a stand. Richard Okun outlined the responsibility of the State of a wages and incomes policy. But old hat Keynesianism, Weintraub called it Classical Keynesianism, was passé. The really radical stuff was going on at Swarthmore College, where visitors like Galbraith made minced meat of the old style conservatives. To get back to Phelps, he spun a fascinating story of how the wage earner and the profit maker kept on trying to get to terms with each other as the economy pushed to fuller utilisation of resources and the unstable outcomes which followed. Monopolies, both of businesses and of trade unions were the bees in his bonnet and an enlightened policy maker would push them to flexibility and prosperity. My teachers were to make me do the numbers and maths for it, but that economics is also about power and efficiency is important. The Indian discussion has not mentioned it, but Phelps also made serious contributions to mathematical growth theory. That the phlistine masks power was a lesson I was to remember in the models my country asked me to make. I was twenty seven and came back home and am sixty seven years young now, but the fire still burns.

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Why is it that Oliver Williamson's Nobel is not discussed in analytical terms in India? His classic work way back in the mid seventies on markets and hierarchical systems and asset specificity should have immediate resonance with the algebra of Mahalanobis systems with triangularised causal chain equations and non malleability of capital across sectors. But these are not our heroes and so we live in a third world discourse handed down by knowledge domination in the west. It is sad and this paper is an attempt to raise the question that it is high time to raise the Indian analytical discourse.

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# **SOCIAL SCIENCES AND SOCIAL SCIENTISTS : THE ROLE IN SHAPING SOCIETY**

**P.K. Chaubey**  
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## **SOCIAL SCIENCES AND SOCIAL SCIENTISTS: THE ROLE IN SHAPING SOCIETY**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

There is little recognition of the role that social science disciplines and social scientist play in comparison to that of scientists and technologists perhaps their work does not result in physical form or in such neat forms as theorems or laws in physical science disciplines. They may not therefore be attracting best talents in many of social science disciplines. If there are social science technologists providing solution to social problem it is thought that they emanate from common understanding rather scientific understanding of social affairs. Part of the reason is that many social science practioners are not recognized as such but as managers, activists, lawyers, journalists and so on. Once we understand that there are only two broad classifications of science, physical and social, we shall start appreciating the role that social scientists play. One debate that whether social scientists could be professional or activists or they could be both or some of them could be professional and other, activists, is not concluded. Teachers, lawyers, managers and social workers were professionals of sorts and economists were so to a great extent but sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists were more on the side of thinkers rather than practioners. Besides earning their wherewithal through professing and practicing most social scientists are found indulged in some kind of activism, only varying in degree, except innocent ones who may have a degree in social science but otherwise constitute a lot of ignoramus.

### **EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Social Sciences as a distinct form of enquiry from natural sciences on the one hand and arts and humanities on the other emerged much later as a scientific discourse. They seem to share broadly the domain with humanities and arts and methodology of natural sciences. Yet their progress has been pretty fast as people found them of great practical significance and of immediate use in socio-cultural domain insofar as conscious intervention by social agencies could improve the state of human affairs, compared to some of the natural sciences like astronomy, and yet capable of using empirical investigation. Their claim to the status of science actually lies in the use of so called scientific method in the study of human affairs rather than the domain itself. While sciences normally study objective aspects of nature, social sciences naturally consider both subjective and objective aspects of society and social interaction—at times mediated through material world. Nowadays there is emerging interface between scientific

disciplines and social science disciplines as sciences do call for better societal understanding and many social sciences deal with such human phenomena that require scientific/technological interventions.

There were phases in the evolution of social sciences when attempts were to pursue a line of moral neutrality much like as in natural sciences which were distinctly dominated by empirical methodology, logical positivism as it came to be known later on, whereas precursors of social sciences were dominated by logical interpretation in the manner of syllogism. Soon it was realized by a large majority of scholars that human affairs could not be completely divorced from moral questions in the ultimate analysis. While I consider the 'social'—the domain, is equally important as the 'science'—the method, in the case of social sciences, only the 'science' might do in the arena of natural sciences. That is why science could go without an adjective—natural or physical but social science would need adjective social. This observation need not be carried too far as the subject-matter was always given equal attention so much so that word science could become a collective noun for zoology to physics, botany to astronomy and chemistry to astrophysics.

A society is more than that the sum total of its constituents, a reality sui generis, pointed out Durkheim. The relationships between humans, whose actions are actuated by hunger, sleep, sex and fear, are often mediated through physical and institutional world. Humans in a society are likely to be embodiment of self-interest and social values. Self-interest may be enlightened by social values or may not, will depend on a lot of circumstances. Envy, jealousy, hate and greed on the one hand and love, sympathy, and altruism on the other will remain with man and there will be individual differences. Yet, it is clear that studies related to human nature beyond mechanical biology—what humans love or fear, of human action beyond psychomotor, of group behaviour and its societal consequences, are all proper provinces of social science pursuits. There exists a social consciousness, many scholars and thinkers, which may be at variance with community consciousness in plural societies.

Basic questions of moral philosophy, it seems, will ever remain at the background of social science research, which have been categorized into groups: teleological and deontological. Actions are right if they result in desirable state of affairs and are therefore desirable. This is an ontological proposition, an instrumentalist approach. Only those actions that are right in some intrinsic way are desirable. This is deontological proposition. In one, actions as instruments are value-neutral; it is their consequences which need to be judged from the value angle. In the other actions are themselves value-loaded.

However, it becomes clear that natural sciences and social sciences differed in one fundamental sense that human actions have to be studied very often in the context of what is socially right though there could be another level of discourse on what is right and there we enter the province of philosophy. In fact, there are a number of philosophical schools in any particular social science but they are most prominent in the

case of pedagogy of education. They provide alternative perspectives for analysis, even if somewhat overlapping.

### DOMAIN OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The range of social sciences vary greatly as they cover the study of past events and achievements/failures of human society and evolution of different societies and their institutions as well as contemporary—or may be eternal—human behaviour, relationships and institutions. Quite often we note the range varying from history to archaeology, from cultural anthropology to sociology, from political science to economics and political economy, from social psychology and industrial psychology to criminology, from education to social work, and from demography to human geography, which are all traditional disciplines. But now are emerging subjects like sociobiology, neuro-psychology and medical ethics on the one hand and environmental social sciences on the other. At the same time there have been attempts to include many of the humanities disciplines within its fold and call for this broader set within human sciences as they are increasingly using so-called scientific method in their studies. In a way whatever is studied in an analytical fashion in societal affairs and is not a synthetic, creative activity like poetry or painting or dramatics, is social science. In fact these arts themselves lend to analytical scrutiny by the critics who more often employ scientific logic though involving a lot of value judgements actually act more as social scientists.

But if we divide the whole spectrum of analytical enquiry into natural and social domains, we get to include commerce, management, law and linguistics within the fold of social science. It can be easily seen that discipline of management, if it can be called so, involves as diverse material as psychological on the one hand and financial on the other hand interspersed with economics and sociology. Organisational behaviour gets a pride of place and so does human resources. But now most important dimension that is emerging is the study of behavioural aspects of actors and players in financial market, leaving aside the field of marketing which heavily depends on understanding of human psychology. Many people find that the whole division of consumption has psychological basis. While Keynes had given a lot of importance to animal spirits of humans today the school of rational expectations gives a lot of clue to public policy design. Behaviour of groups, teams and minorities have important fields of study as the electoral behaviour. Leadership has become as important in business and government and defence establishments as it had traditionally been in politics. Seeking convergence of employees' goals with those of the organization is an exercise in motivation because it is easy for an employee to identify his goals with social values than with intermediary objectives. Incentives and disincentives that motivate and discourage employees or dissuade from doing undesirable things, at different levels, are the nuances better understood by social scientists, especially those specialized in psychology and social work, and their advice is invariably sought in making such crucial decisions.

Operations research is considered an important tool of managerial decision-making whether it has to be made in business or in defence. It is very much mathematical in structure and statistics may play an important role in many of its formulations. One



may call it, though perhaps with some hesitation, a social science for its objective function is often economic or financial in nature or the objective is one of economization and many of its constraints may be behavioural as they may be technical. 'Operations' themselves are in a social or societal setting. These days games theory comes to explain many political and diplomatic situations as much as they come handy for social and economic analysis. But surprisingly they are explaining biological phenomena too. Decision making has itself emerged as a sub-discipline which deals with a variety of situations involving players and risk/uncertainty.

Law and economics has emerged as a distinct discipline though it took quite some time in asserting itself. But otherwise too, law has explicitly recognized the importance of social science understanding of group behaviour. Jurisprudence might have been based on basic assumptions of human behaviour but cognizance of impact of milieu has been ever evolving. Different laws and their violations are now being studied from economic angles which in turn seek guidance from human psychology as also institutional setting and social milieu. Later I shall be arguing that various institutions, many of which have organizational structure, are social product and as such they can be viewed as technology counterpart of social sciences. It goes without saying many institutions evolved before social science articulation of phenomena, processes, events and episodes.

#### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIAL CONTEXT

Science and technology, though very much related, are two distinctly different human pursuits. Science discovers what is already in existence in nature but man is ignorant about while technology invents something which is not in existence in its present form. Science discovers laws (of motion, attraction/repulsion; of progression, of evolution, of formation), species and their characteristics, substances and their properties, etc. Science builds theories in terms of patterns or cause-effect relationship to explain phenomena, processes and episodes and perhaps to predict the future course. Theories are refined, contextualized or refuted. Technology on the other hand may apply the scientific laws consciously or unconsciously but its pursuit invents an appliance, instrument or equipment, develops a new process or creates a new substance. Scientific activity is often a product of curiosity, an inner urge of man to know, while technological activity is an expression of societal needs, at times insipient, may be at times just of a small section—say farmers or ink makers or managers of sea explorations or even of evil doers as of freedom fighters.

Scientists are involved in discovering the elements of oneness in a diverse world with the belief that such elements exist while technological works will make phenomenal world more diverse. One pursues some kind of unity and uniformity while the other creates diversity, variety and plurality. Even when they differentiate, as the present writer is doing right now, he pursues the approach of finding oneness within a domain and contrast it with another domain within which he discovers another element of oneness. In a sense, scientists are on the noumenal side of phenomenal world while technologists are on phenomenal side of that world. What do we say about those whose approach is noumenal and whose world of inquiry is also noumenal, like pure mathematicians? Some

of the deep thinkers do not therefore consider mathematics a science; it is more akin to logic and philosophy to their mind. However, it goes without saying that technological experiments may lead to scientific discoveries and attempts to discover may result in some kind of invention.

## TECHNOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONS

Technology and institutions are seen as two varieties of solutions to human and societal problems. Man has to deal with man often through or for material world. Technology is the relationship of man with nature while institution is the relationship of man with man. They come almost as twins. One kind of farming practice has one kind of relationship between man and man—for example, owners, tenants, and tillers and of course the State. In a way, technology and institutions are both societal products which arise. Technology and institutions run parallel in their secular journey but not at the same pace and society faces the tensions but whether it is human incapability to run them parallel or they assume their autonomy, has no final answer. Moreover, when one society comes into interaction with another through assimilation or subjugation, the interaction gives rise to certain kind of institutions. There is a history of slavery and there is a history of federal living and there is a history of civil war.

If human intellectual pursuits could be divided in two broad groups of discovery or creation, that is science and technology, institutions fall in the category of technology. As the word 'man' in opposition to nature or god includes woman but otherwise not, the word 'technology' may include institutions in contrast to 'science' as technology and institutions are creation of human society and are a social product. It is possible that certain rules, institutions, may be evolved by ticket-less passengers or burglars may get some technology and bankers another. All social products—technology or institutions—may not always be good in larger social context but they are nevertheless social products. Think of banking in Robinson Crusoe economy! One can of course still think of a canoe or law of gravitation.

Human intellectual pursuits in the category of discovery about facts and laws, substances and ideas—of what has been in existence, or in the category of creation—transformation of matter/energy from one form to another whether in terms of appliances, equipments, substances or from one form of energy into another form as also creation of institutions of marriage and family, private property and market, communal associations, State, judiciary, police, jail, reform houses and instruments for effecting institutions. It will look audacious to put many so-called creative activities within the fold of technology but creation of instruments, physical and notional, and institutions are as much social products as are transformers, planes and roads and bridges. Creation of the ideas leading to making of instruments and institutions is a social product as they come to resolve and solve one or the other problems a society or a group or a community faces whether it is about getting water within the house or resolving a property dispute with the neighbour.

## ROLE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND SCIENTISTS

Social Scientists rarely remain purely scientists establishing laws and delineating patterns; they often transgress, and rightly so, into technology/institutional areas. To the extent they make theories about how a certain group will behave in certain circumstances or react to certain stimuli and how society is likely to evolve in certain phase or what kind of forces are likely to, work in certain social situations or why certain tribes behave in a certain manner or certain institutions emerge in certain groups and not in others or what kind of interface between technological forces and social institutions of relationship between man and man existed in certain phases of evolutions or how classes are formed or mutate. To illustrate further from the field of economics, the economists have bothered why did market emerge and why do they fail in certain conditions to play the role of efficient allocation of resources and what are the possible solutions, but also what are the conditions for government failure. They have also bothered about why did the institution of firm arise and what kind of arrangements within the firm itself take place as well as in what areas what kind of firms go in for sourcing, in-sourcing or outsourcing. In recent past, economic explanations have been offered for demographic processes like birth and decisions like number of children and for social institutions like marriage and family and even the processes for breakup of marriage and division of families.

There are many a time alternative explanations, derived from use of alternative perspectives. There have been developed theories for emergence of the State and the conditions when the State can emerge in a society. They have often been suggested in terms of significant rise in the level of productivity so that the society could afford to keep away from material production and assign the role of defending the society from external aggression or internal turmoil and that of cultivating refined tastes, unifying rituals, etc. Yet there are alternative conceptions of the State, defining its relationship with the society or sections thereof as well as how does it behave and why does it behave so vis-à-vis its constituents. Anthropologists have been bothering about how the gift system came into being and when did it become a formal system of barter exchange. Economists bothered why was the money invented and what other role did it play. They have also worried about why and how other financial institutions originated and how did they shape the role and functions of the State. But they also reason out contemporary phenomena like suicides by farmers and youth in terms of pressure and milieu and who are the ones more likely to commit. Many did and do bother about corruption and rent-seeking behaviour among police personnel, bureaucracy and politicians.

Social Scientists develop theories, test them and refine them. They add conditions for operation of theories or refute them. They may also contextualize them. Alternative theories coexist with substantial validity in social sciences, it is often remarked, whereas in natural sciences old theories are often replaced by new ones. But social scientists are more likely to apply them, if they can be applied, in real field often in collaboration with science/technology inputs. They are likely to work in/for firms, institutions and organizations—in different divisions, ministries/departments of different levels of the government—also in their committees, commissions, councils, boards, authorities, corporations, media—print and electronic, and international/multilateral organizations, besides research and teaching establishments. But if we try to classify their role, we find

that they provide inputs to the processes of and their help is solicited for decision-making, policy-making and opinion-making. They may play an active role and they may play a passive one. It does not mean that there are no pure social scientists—just engaged in theory making for historical happenings or contemporary ones, nor does it mean that all social scientists are involved or called upon to undertake all kinds of technological activities of making—decision, policy and opinion. But most professional social scientists end up working in one or the other organization or establishments where they are called upon to provide inputs for at least one of the three. Few could be free lance.

## DECISION MAKING

Decisions have to be made by individuals, groups, communities, nations and by gram sabhas, municipalities, sub-national and national bodies, by multilateral bodies as well as by groups now called as community based organizations, non-government organizations and civil societies. With increasing complexity of the society and growing specialism, even an individual consults for one's carrier, children's study, health and personality development, marriage and marital discord, design of the house and its interior decoration, property disputes with parents/children and siblings, investments in reality and financial instruments and tax planning, and so on. He might have done so earlier but now, if he can afford he now goes for expert advice. Except the physicians, architects and engineers, most of consultants he hires are specialized in one or more social science disciplines, ranging from accounting to clinical psychology. He also consults astrologers and yoga/fitness experts who often advise him some kind of rituals or physical exercises and postures. Which category to put them into is a difficult question but at least the former one cares for some man to man relationship even though both may profess their specialisation in cosmic relationships between man and god or between terrestrial bodies and celestial bodies. Social sciences, as defined here in the broader context, are playing a significant role. Also, in curing for problems of drug addiction and alcoholism, often psychologists and social workers are invited to help, besides physicians.

Local level democratic bodies have often been supplemented by local authorities to take many municipal affairs and they are often said to be a body of experts in planning and development, water and electricity supply, management of sewerage and draining. Even if one questions the kind of hierarchical structure that exists between democratic bodies and authorities at local level one may not deny the role of experts. Among the experts are included social scientists from traditional social science disciplines also. Both democratic bodies and expert bodies further commission such studies as involve social scientists who are of late developing some expertise in environmental and ecological concerns. They also seek advice from political scientists, economists and financial experts on the manners of mobilizing resources and sometimes on disbursements.

Governments at State and Federal levels have created several permanent corporations, commissions, councils, boards, and authorities whether it is about education, health, industrial public enterprises, infrastructural development, financial architecture or welfare schemes where social science experts are playing their respective roles. But more importantly, for example, agriculture experts, say in farmers' commission, are developing

and using their societal understanding. The governments keep setting up ad hoc commissions and committees like finance commission, education commission, knowledge commission and pay commission and taxation reforms committees for seeking expert opinion before taking a decision to have impact of permanent nature and experts include social scientists and scientists having social science understanding. In case there exists a policy for setting up an industrial unit in the public sector in a backward region with a view to promoting balanced regional development, which may be an important element of the economic policy, expert opinion is needed to decide its form—as a departmental enterprise, a corporation or a company, whether to have partnership with a private company and if so, division of the share capital. Within each economic organization, especially if related with promotional activities, social scientists, especially those having knowledge of economics are needed whether it is related with trade, production or distribution. Whether to borrow capital and wherefrom is an issue better delineated by financial experts—it is another issue that in recent past engineers have specialized in the area of finance. Likewise they may advise on insurance matters etc. Banks, non-banking financial institutions such as mutual funds and insurance company employ economists to carry out research on sector specific aspects as well as on macroeconomic aspects of the economy in order to help in better decision-making. These governments have created specialized cadres for economics, trade and statistics. Everywhere social science specialists, including management experts are playing their respective roles.

When a project has to be undertaken say of building a dam one may ask whether a road can be built over it and whether a rail bridge can be built on top of the road, whether the dam should be used for irrigation purposes or should it generate power as well. Catchment and command areas, submergence of villages, land, forests, flora and fauna have all to be studied and, in addition, whether it is worth relocating the people affected and securing them equivalent livelihood options and on the top of all whether it will affect their social and cultural milieu. Whether these decisions will be compatible with various proclaimed policies, is again an issue to be squarely dealt with. A variety of social science inputs would be needed in such exercises.

All the United Nations expert bodies and other multilateral bodies, including non-governmental international organizations seek involvement of economists, sociologists, and anthropologists. The World Bank consults various social scientists and keeps some of them on payroll to understand the likely impacts of the projects it undertakes and sponsors from the point of view of tribals, weaker sections and environment. Likewise other agencies involved in funding like ADB or providing liquidity like IMF do consult social scientists though sometime we have reservations on their decisions. WTO and WIPO run their training programmes for educating government officials, scholars and others on social science related material—economics and law, negotiation and bargain.

Role of social sciences and social scientists seems to be all-pervading in decision-making at any level.

## POLICY MAKING

Public policy is an affirmation of positive actions and negative sanctions, executed through legislative, executive and administrative channels by a government often in pursuance of the constitutional directives whose interpretation may change in the course of time due to change in ethos. The set of actions and sanctions is often chosen from a set of possible alternatives, which may subserve the same set of objectives. Chosen policy is purportedly optimum in certain terms. Public policy can be sub-National and supra-National in scope. Multilateral agreements are broad policy statements of international commitments. Our illustrations will mostly confine to national level.

Most of the policies first set out in their statements, objectives and then measures, means and strategies to attain them in a broad framework. There exists a whole discipline of public choice about how policies are formulated by people's representatives who may care for their interests as of the public and the role that bureaucracy might play and also how committees and commissions, task forces and expert groups go about suggesting policies. Policies may entail legislative enactment in terms of Acts and Rules and establishment of certain institutions where they relate to education, health, family planning, shelter or food security. But there can be a prohibition policy and there can be one on littering. It simply means policies are broad commitments and guidelines for political and bureaucratic executive in certain areas needing intervention.

Practically everywhere an advice is to be sought from experts in social sciences and where scientists are involved they use their societal understanding. If one carefully studies various policies, one gets a clear feeling that, besides the motive of general growth and development, the State tries to protect or promote through the policies the interest of industry, labour or consumer or a combination of them or a section of them. But there are policies for intervention in the matter of cultural, religious and social practices—not in line with widely held contemporary values and yet for non-intervention in certain cases like minorities or certain tribes who may seek protection of certain rituals and practices.

There is hardly any secular matter—even policies on science and technology, nutrition or medical care—where social scientists will have no say. Then there are secular aspects of religious matters where the State may have stakes.

There are policies related with religious matters, even if the State is secular for reasons of its social and cultural aspects as well as for protecting the interests of weaker sections and preserving the interests of minorities in a plural society like India. Social scientists have a great role in advising, for example, whether reservations are needed and, if yes, where—education, jobs and legislatures, and for how long—a limited duration, a long time or indefinitely. What kind of riders, like income/status threshold, need to be employed, needs judicious considerations. What are the implications and repercussions are better analysed by social scientists and their inputs are of crucial importance in policy making in such areas. What kind of policy the government can have in the matter of civil law—whether to have a uniform set of laws or differentiated along the religious lines and



yet permit customary rules in the case of tribes and aborigines, is a matter in which social science scholars have a better say.

Economic policies vary in range and variety. There is trade policy on the one hand and industrialization policy on the other; *tendu patta* policy on the one hand and tribal policy on the other. There is policy matter related with value added tax on the one hand and medium term fiscal policy on the other, and priority sector lending on the one hand and monetary policy on the other.

If we concentrate on policies related to economic matters, we can easily classify them as macroeconomic, sectoral (often called as microeconomic), and sectional. Macroeconomic policies are indirect but their influence is normally economy-wide. Monetary policy through bank rate, repo and reverse repo rates (open market operations), cash reserve ratio, statutory liquidity ratio and is usually administered by the central bank but is influenced by the reading of movements in the economy as much as by the policies of general government. A whole lot of external flows and happenings need to be considered. Clearly economists, bankers—commercial and development, and financial experts are called upon to tender advice in this policy arena. Then there is fiscal policy dealing with taxation, non-tax revenue sources like profit/dividend, royalty and fees on the one hand and expenditure on revenue/capital and plan/non-plan heads. How public utility services be charged and whether there ought to be sectoral/sectional cross-subsidization is better advised by economists. What are implications and repercussions of each element of the gamut of actions and the total fiscal matrix are analysed by economists and government economists do advise. But more importantly they help delineate a mid-term fiscal policy. Then there is the issue of environment policy, which encompasses most sectors of the economy and the society. Policies on foreign capital inflows, on export promotion and import or import substitution, on foreign banking operations are economy-wide yet often they have indications on sectors. There is also competition policy about ensuring non-monopolistic acquisition and mergers.

Sectoral policies range from agriculture to industry to power, from coal to textile to mineral extraction, from export-import to transport, from tourism to sports, from insurance to telecom, from space to nuclear. Let us take the example of industrial policy, which has been evolving over years. Perusing them, one gathers that an industrial policy involves parameters which indicate about ownership spheres of public, private, and joint, participation of foreign capital and its extent, operation of large/medium/small/micro enterprises, level of technology, reservation of certain products/industries for certain sections, availability of credit on concessional terms and tax exemption for some years if industries are located in backward regions. Likewise agriculture policy is likely to suggest the kind of agrarian relations, the kind of technological applications, the kind of cropping pattern and the kind of irrigation system it would like to promote and the ways of doing so. There will also be indications about regulatory mechanisms before the start of business and during the course of business.

Let us take up telecom policy. Whether there have to be only state sponsored players or there should be fair competition between public and private players; if in

public sector, whether departmental ones or corporations—if corporation, whether everywhere or in some selected cities/circles, and if in private sector what level of foreign direct investment may be permitted; whether the department which provides the service should also regulate the players or a separate regulatory authority should be set up are all parts of the telecom policy. Which authority should allocate spectrum, which authority should determine the charges which players may have to pay for uplinking or downlinking between different levels and so on.

Transport policy deals with promotion and coordination of different modes of transporting goods and people as also different types of players with a view to economise resources. Sometimes we find that one or the other mode is being protected, like our transport policy till other day was to protect the railways from competition with road transport in passenger segment and the argument was that it was a national monopoly but then why not in goods segment. At the same time air traffic was nationalized in early 1950s through compulsory merger to salvage the private operators from going broke, despite indirect subsidy and business by the government, with the argument that it will help realize the full potential of technical developments rapidly taking place in civil air transport.

Social sector has occupied a prime importance. Education has its sub-sectors of academic, vocational and professional streams. For each of these there has to be a policy well dovetailed with overall education policy, which has to be seen in the context of manpower requirement of various sectors of the economy. Whether institutions have to be entirely private or both the sectors to compete and to what extent, whether foreign players are to be allowed and if so with what terms, and whether lateral entries are to be permitted, whether reservation for certain sections have to be made among the entrants and staff, whether some of the streams have to be subsidized whereas others have to be sort of taxed (fee to be higher than cost in government-run institutions), whether and to what extent autonomy to be given to educational institutions—schools, colleges, institutes and universities, are some of the elements.

Likewise there has to be formulated a health policy in any civilized society which has however to consider its ethnic and geographical diversity along with interest and role of private sector, including own account physicians, by the State. How to efficaciously reach sparsely populated tribal population engaged in primary sector activities like agricultural operations, for medical aid without dislocating them from their livelihood occupations, is an important consideration for a country like India. With the passage of time notion of a new kind of housing with certain civic amenities is developing fast and modern States are engaged in finding out how to go about shelter for all. The matter gets complicated in large urban habitations as the distinction between workplace and living space is the accepted norm here. Whether to permit high rise buildings and in which areas so as to ensuring minimum risk of natural disaster and keeping in view possibility, availability and economy in providing utilities will all be elements worth considering as would be the factors of congestion of people and traffic and pollution of air, water and noise. Differences in work opportunities between cities and villages encourage economic migration. But different countries are found to have different policies, depending on their



perception whether there works a push-and-pull or a push-and-push mechanism. Whether migration has to be stemmed, and if so whether it has to be stemmed through indirect mechanism or direct intervention. If counter-magnates have to be created to decongest overcrowded metros, resources are needed. Even if in the long-run most activities synergize, in the short-run, all sectors and activities compete with each other for scarce resources, a careful optimization exercise has to be conducted through planning and budget processes.

In fact, no development project activity comes with ease without problems to some people. Take for example the case of major dams and power projects or special zones or large factory establishments whether under private or government ownership, some people have to be displaced from their home, hearth and livelihood. What could be a reasonable rehabilitation and resettlement policy? We need economists, sociologists and anthropologists to advise the government to choose a wholesome policy which is politically acceptable and financially feasible even if overall returns in terms of social cost benefit analysis are found to be good.

These days intellectual property is a matter of intense discussion. Most countries have complied with the TRIPs provisions of the World Trade Organization. How strict should be enforcement policy regarding piracy and infringement and before that there is question of awareness for general public, education policy for various stakeholders and training policy for registrars of different forms of IPRs and enforcers like police, customs officials and judiciary. Where there was more controversy, member-States of the WTO were allowed to adopt a *sui generis* mechanism. India adopted a *sui generis* system in the case of plant breeders' rights and protected farmers' right to retain seed for self-use.

Competition policy, consumer protection policy, labour policy, child labour policy, social security policy, reservation policy, population policy, employment policy, sports policy, science policy, technology policy, tribal policy, criminal justice policy, drug policy, foreign policy, policy for election funding and policy for physically/mentally challenged could be all be listed. Illustrations could be provided on each of these. There are many more in any real and sizeable society.

While decision-making may be at individual and family level, policy-making is invariably at some level of government, normally with legislative power, though corporate and religious bodies may also be resorting to some kind of policy-making.

One can of course think of policies which may be extra-State in nature. For example there may be electoral policy of a political party to go alone or seek support of like minded parties or to decide whether work for society from outside the government and often against it or through government by using State power. The parties have been found growing in wisdom in a way. They have learnt about median voter theorem through experimentation, as it seems to be the case in India. If more parties are assuming centralist posture it is because of the realization that majority of voters have single-peaked preference which entails what is known as 'median voter wins'.

## OPINION-MAKING

We all make opinions about people—friends, foes, acquaintances and relations, about things we possess and wish to possess including toothpaste, car, gold and television channels, about issues that immediately affect us but also those with which we may be remotely connected. We wish to advise American Presidents as to whether they should have gone to war in Vietnam or should have dealt with Iraq or Afghanistan the way they did. What we are going to say about in subsequent paragraphs about public opinion about public issues and avoid personal opinions about things like fruits and candies but surely cannot avoid those related to smoking and drinking. Merit goods though private in consumption are the goods which society opines good for the individuals even if they have little externality factor.

Public opinion is understandably an aggregate of individual attitudes or beliefs about a given issue which individuals may not severally be facing. The issues may vary from abortion to child marriage to smoking; from Tamil problem in Sri Lanka to monarchy in Nepal to democratization in Bhutan; from relations of India with Pakistan and China to cooperation with powerful nations to seek permanent seat in the United Nations to international intervention in Myanmar. The issues may just relate to new developments in cricket world or dealing with thieves and chain snatchers in some areas of the country. These opinions may be at variance with policies pursued by governments. Different governments may think and act somewhat differently.

Speaking about the public role of public opinion, somebody has remarked that public opinion plays the same role in social function as religion plays for a community. Though there are others who think public opinion in a western style democracy is often susceptible to elite manipulation. Propagandists and other manipulators use the communication media to disseminate the ideas on which opinions are based. Some scholars also talk about 'publics' as there are many publics in a plural society. Others hold still stronger opinion about public opinion and say that there is an unhappy truth about public opinion has been destructively wrong at critical juncture and people have been found to impose critical veto upon the informed and responsible officials. Actually such scholars are too opinionated as they criticize the extra-establishment elements as 'too late with too little, too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutral or appeasing in negotiation or too intransigent'. All diverse opinions are grounded in ones' understanding of empirical reality about the society and implications of the alternative resolutions of a social issue. A social issue goes beyond a person or a group and affects much larger society. Suicide and euthanasia are not seen as personal as a choice of dessert for supper but duly seen as social issues as they have larger ramifications.

Opinions are so powerful that they can make and unmake nations! They indeed decide the complexion of nations, societies, communities, and groups by inculcating social values, including group values, and modifying behaviour through ethical practices. Various brutal practices if could be done away with were not solely due to state action

but due to education of masses against them. Whether it is slavery or child labour, whether widow-burning or child marriage, if any policies succeed with finality, it is because of opinion in their favour. Propaganda has a value in spreading a view, was recognized by all ideologues, as advertisement has a value in creating market, and is duly recognized by economists and other social scientists.

Thinkers were often divided in two groups, though not always warring. Some worked on society through the State and some through other channels, media being one of them. There were pamphleteers too in Europe in the eighteenth century who either advocated a policy or a change in existing policy. The Poor Laws and Corn Law are famous for debates. Protection from competition through free trade had occupied and still occupies a lot of debate. These were major economic debates once upon a time. Today globalization occupies that space. In fifties, nationalization dominated the policy space but opinion makers made a lot of arguments against it. Now it is privatization but there are many researchers against it. Many opinion-makers may not be designated social scientists but they are of that sort. Smith and Malthus, Marx and Mills, Keynes and Pigou, they were all engaged in opinion making and they were all known social scientists, economists. What do we say about Gandhi? Gandhi was a great opinion-maker of our times. It was through the Indian Opinion, Young India and Harijan that he was moulding opinion of the people, the rulers, the ruled and the bystanders. He has been acknowledged as a journalist but rarely a social scientist. But look at his writings, every other sentence is a pure logic and every other sentence is an empirical observation. No doubt there are axioms and assertions. But total submission he makes is disarming logic. He seems to be scoring on logical basis. He could not be anything but a social scientist as defined in this paper. So were all reformers: Raja Ramohun Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rabindra Nath Tagore, if not Jawaharlal Nehru, Ballabh Bhai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who had in later years great role in policy making. But many of the revolutionaries are in that category only. Through a lot of popular writings many scholars are waging an opinion war on matters of civil, social, cultural, political and economic relevance.

For example, on what is secularism, we have variety of shades of the notion. Some start from the European debate about sharing of domain of human activities and discourse between the king and the pope and hold that the State should have nothing to do with religion and it should be a-religious in approach. Others tend to ascribe it a new meaning of equidistance from or equal respect for all religions. Some hold a secular state is not theocratic but it not need be atheist. Still others hold the opinion about communities that such and such communities are secular by nature, and such and such are not. Each opinion has its own set of arguments based on one's understanding of empirical reality, even if fragmented in others' views and understanding.

Then there is hardly a policy matter where there does not exist an opinion in favour of a particular angle, which is more likely to be a majority one. But there invariably exist more than two opinions against it, which may not be very dominant at that point of time. The seeds of improvement in terms of contents of policy are in these so-called minority opinions. Most of these opinions are grounded in understanding of empirical reality and prevailing views about fairness, justice and equity. These opinion

makers are the people who lead movements. The movements often precede the policies. For example, it is the opinion in favour of climatic change that some research agenda and some policy changes are in offing. If something good has come out in the matter of rehabilitation and resettlement of victims of development projects it was because popular opinion could not be ignored altogether. Opinions are supposed to represent popular sentiments but in fact are backed by social science understanding of social locale.

Public opinions play a great role, is undoubted in shaping the complexion of a society, truly speaking of the world as a whole. They mould the opinion of people, nations, governments and other actors whether it is about wild life or climate change, whether it is about peace efforts and imposition of war, whether it is about work participation of women, children or old or about role of man in home making. Whether chopping of hands of thieves, is justified at all. Should capital punishment be abolished? How should terrorist problem be articulated as a problem of socio-economic deprivation or as a problem of law and order, whatever the meaning of that phrase? How militancy and insurgency has to be dealt with?

This role of articulation by social scientists is well accepted, as the resolution of the issue depends on the articulation. But what is little less realized, is the great role that social sciences and social scientists play in creating a public opinion, molding it, refining it and suggesting strategy and tactics of putting it forward.

Towards the end of the essay what I wish to emphasise is that our social science understanding is not confined to the faculty of social science in a typical university nor our social scientists are professors in social science subjects, appointed in colleges, institutes and universities but are widely spread across many walks of life in academia, in business, in government, in media, in multilateral organizations, in NGOs and CBOs—practically everywhere, except in technical laboratories; but technologists therein are not oblivious of the direction, complexion and institutions that society has and should have.

Thus, social scientists are engaged in developing theories, explaining social phenomena, processes and events and making predictions about future course of events. But they act as professionals and activists too. Social scientists, as broadly defined in this piece, help individuals, groups, communities, governments, international bodies, non-government organizations and people at large in decision-making, policy-making and opinion-making.

(The discussion with Dr. D. P. Sharma is thankfully acknowledgement.)



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**PROF. D.P. MUKERJI MEMORIAL LECTURE: 2004**  
**TEACHING OF ECONOMICS IN INDIA :**  
**CHALLENGES FOR ORIENTING THE PRAXIOLOGY**

**P.K. Chaubey**  
Indian Institute of Public Administration  
New Delhi



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**D.P. MUKERJI**

I was a child of barely 10 years when Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji (05.10.1894-05.12.1961) passed away in December 1961 at the age of 67. I had only known that he was a rare scholar of Economics and Sociology and a pillar of Lucknow School of Economics and Sociology. He had varied interests in life and a wide range of knowledge. Having done M.A. in History (1918) and M.A. in Economics (1920) from the University of Calcutta and spending a brief stint in Bangabhasi College in Calcutta, he came to join Lucknow University as Lecturer in Economics and Sociology in 1922, where he later became Reader in 1945 and was made Professor in his personal capacity in 1951. He also served the first U.P. Congress Government under Govind Ballabh Pant (1937-40) as Director of Information and created the Bureau of Economics and Statistics. In 1947, he also headed U.P. Labour Enquiry Committee. In 1951 he was a Visiting Professor in I.I.S.S. at the Hague.

Besides writing in Economics, Sociology and History, he wrote on music. But he was a litterateur as well and wrote a few novels, short stories and essays in Bengali. He has been recognized as teacher, economist, sociologist, musicologist, litterateur, and historian of rare quality. He was an unconventional writer and critic and was particularly known for his provocative lectures and persuasive coffee house interactive discussions.

I am informed that Zakir Hussain invited him to the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) after his retirement from Lucknow University. He built the Department of Economics of the AMU during 1954-1958 as chairman of the Department. His inaugural lecture in the AMU, as was a practice in the past, was on '*An Economic Theory for India*'. Dissatisfied as he was with fragmentary framework of contents of Economics as taught in India then, he pleaded for evolving a theory that served well the planning concerns of India and which he thought could fruitfully be drawn from Marx, Schumpeter and Keynes. But he emphasized that it had all to be rooted in the Indian cultural milieu.

[I had a chance to read some of his writings as I was asked almost ten years ago to write a piece on his contributions in Economics for his Birth Centenary seminar organized at G.B. Pant Social Science Institute at Allahabad. I could hardly imagine that I could one day be asked to deliver a memorial lecture in his name. I consider it a token of love and affection of the social science fraternity rather than my contribution to or



competence in social science that the Indian Social Science Association selected me for the coveted fellowship this year.

Almost fifteen years ago, I was invited as one of the select scholars to participate in a workshop on *Teaching of Economics in India* in Bangalore, which was organized as a brainstorming session, on the advice of (now late) Professor Sukhamoy Chakravarty, by the Indian Economics Association Trust for Research and Development. I had written a small piece, little realizing that someday I would be asked to deliver a memorial lecture on the same theme after the name of a scholar who had worried over the matter almost fifty years ago.]

## INTRODUCTION

I would like to take a rather broader view of teaching of economics than that at college and university level in the formal set-up, which had been the major focus of those who earlier addressed to this issue, presumably because they were in no way associated with teaching at school level. Since I was requested by the NCERT to write a textbook on '*Indian Economic Development*', I had an occasion to reflect on economics at school level. In fact, one should discuss education of economics, which would include teaching of students and training of economics professionals and others, and perhaps self-learning. After all, Hicks (1976) turned from an appallingly ignorant, to use his phrase in his confession, into an economist of great standing through informal channels of discussion and interaction with peers and superiors when he became a teacher in the London School of Economics. I shall largely confine myself within the domain of formal teaching, not covering non-formal, distance-mode, and parallel-college learning because of my ignorance about their working rather than my wish not to recognize their role, which I believe is great. Somebody should do that job too.

I do not expect myself to finally resolve any issue that confronts us but shall try my level best to delineate a few broad parameters, which could be taken up subsequently by scholars for further refinement and development. In some advanced countries this is almost a continuing exercise in professional meets involving some of the best brains and therefore they could ponder over pedagogy and evaluation besides content. The Indian Economic Association, the only All-India learned body of economics in India, discussed the theme of Indian Economics in 1942 and organized a post-conference seminar on Teaching of Economics in 1974. On both the occasions, the focus was relevance of received Economics—often said to be General Economics, which Joan Robinson (1961) thought was a very particular Economics. Later in 1989, in the workshop organized by the Indian Economic Association for Research and Development on *Teaching of Economics in India* in Bangalore, this was one of the issues

The invitation to the workshop on the *Teaching of Economics in India* had issued three major questions: What is the relevance of the content of Economics as is taught today in the Indian Universities? The tenuous relationship, which economics came to assume with other social sciences in the course of time, occasioned by the workshop, was also referred to: What are the interrelationships between economics and other social sciences as envisaged in the University curricula? In addition, the issue of

'quantification' of, that is the application of mathematics and statistics in, economics with regards to its extent and intensity and purpose was also taken up: What is the role of the modern quantitative techniques in the teaching of Economics in India?

In responding to these issues, the participant-scholars threw up other issues also such as Indianizing the science of economics and revolutionizing the material, which passes under the rubric of Indian economics. It is a little surprising that, in India as well as perhaps elsewhere, nobody ever suggested that not only national and international but also regional and local issues should form part of our teaching of economics at various stages of its teaching.

Normally what we do in the meetings of the Board of Studies in the Universities or Syllabus drafting exercises in the school examination boards, is to include as much new material as possible except for the constraints of teachers' competence, students' capability, and textbooks' availability. Rarely the issue of relevance is raised. The UGC carried out three exercises in 1979, 1988 and 2001 but there was said very little about the relevance in comparison to advances in the sciences.

[Let me emphasize that the linear fashion in which we discuss the issues is often very defective in approach but very expedient in delivery. There are various feedback and feed-forward loops, some of which I could take cognizance of with little less justice but with a view to preventing you from voting with feet. I offer my apologies for that.]

First things, first. Economics has gradually been drifting from scholastic traditions comprehending the whole to narrow professional specialisms. There are therefore fewer ideologues today and more professionals in almost all fields. Specialisms could roughly be said to be of three varieties: (a) pan-economy special aspects like trade, banking and labour, (b) sector specific aspects like industry, agriculture and tourism, and (c) interdisciplinary themes like gender economics, law and economics, environmental economics, and energy economics. Even when Economics had become a professional discipline, most people trained as economists were employed as teachers and only a few in the government or international organizations, very few in the research organizations and still fewer in business or media. The relative importance of non-teaching professions has of late been increasing. Teaching of economics at lower levels should take note of this fact so that there is enough economics that is intelligible to the general public.

But then, Economics does not enjoy the same standing as it did before— even say forty-fifty years ago. In the US academia, economists fetched second highest salaries after physicists in nineteen fifties and sixties. There was then prevailing no great management education. Best brains, opting for social science and humanities disciplines were attracted by Economics. Even commerce was not so popular. Today there are many more openings available for brilliant ones. Earlier, interdisciplinary work was espoused by one group of scholars but often detested by another. Today Economics has befriended Management, Environment, Law, Finance and host of other subjects. Its earlier allies like Political Science and Sociology, have also involved more and more economics tools. Each of its sectoral branches has also flourished. Importance in many senses seems to

have increased but scope for pursuing pure academic economics—ivory tower economics as some would say—has somewhat come down.

Today, Economics is truly becoming a professional subject as law, medicine or engineering. It may be more professional than sociology and political science but much less professional than even social work. (Professional economists in Kurien's [1996] description are scholars and teachers of economics and his description of professional economists is not much in line with his own description of other professionals like administrators, doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists, politicians and social workers are more of practitioners.) Many of the early learners will settle in life much early, say at technician level and many more would choose such avocations where they will make little use of economics learnt. Content of Economics at early stages should therefore take due note of this fact and therefore it should be general enough and broad enough.

At this stage, may I seek your indulgence to permit me to drift for a while and dwell on teaching as such rather than on that of Economics? We often say: A teaches X to B. A is teacher, B is learner and X is the subject/skill being taught. Economics is X. But X has little meaning without A and B. But who are these A's and B's? Why are A's teaching? Why are B's learning? What are B's expectations from learning economics? In what kind of climes is teaching-learning taking place?

### MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

What, When, Where, Who, Whom, Why and How are seven basic W's, which, alone or in various combinations, are a part of any enquiry. Whom do we teach what we teach and why is proper complement of who do learn what they learn and why. A student enrolled in a regular course in a university is likely to have different motivation than one enrolled in an open university, who in turn is likely to have different motivation than one enrolled in a coaching institution for supplementary instructions. A student who wants to pursue a research career has different motivation than one who wishes to pursue a course in management. One who wishes to join a government service is expected to have a little different motivation than one who wants to work for an NGO. While the factor of individual circumstances need not be discounted, the consequence in terms of motivation needs to be noted. Learning outcomes will depend a great deal on it. Most of the learners have however a motivation of passing examination, securing good grades and qualifying for certain non-specialized jobs.

A further factor needs to be noted. While graduates in areas like medicine, engineering, architecture, law, journalism or music are likely to be practitioners in their respective fields, the same is not true of those in social sciences or even physical sciences even if we choose to ignore those in arts and humanities. Self-employment could perhaps provide the greatest motivation for learning because one's earning depends on one's discernible performance and performance depends on learning, notwithstanding the fact that a lot of learning takes place on the job itself. Even though on-the-job training and refresher courses do a great job, the basic training matters a great deal.

A great majority of economics graduates end up doing something else than practicing economics as teachers, researchers, consultants, policy-makers, advisors, or even as opinion-makers. Thus, economics learning ends up in becoming a sort of general education rather than a specialized one. What we should try to do is to make teaching of economics from broad-based/general to specialized/professional as the education levels move up from school stage to secondary school stage to graduation stage to post-graduation and research.

Entry behaviour, as it is called in training terminology, depends a great deal on motivational factors indicated above. Chakravarty (1986) points out non-motivation in ill-equipped learners for lukewarm disposition but without realizing that ill-equipment is itself a great de-motivating factor. However, it should be added that there exists a distinct possibility of changing this motivation mid-course. The way teachers behave and teach, the curriculum that is imparted, and co-curricular activities that are conducted can all turn some of the learners into great scholars and practitioners. Many of us may narrate our stories in confirmation of this assertion.

Let us finally note that most human beings, if not all, have some internal thirst for discovery and invention and in some of us it survives till late in age. This real want in our breast has made some of us great discoverers and inventors, despite facing odd circumstances. But most of us fail to pursue it for long. The contribution of a great majority goes un-noticed. Sometimes, it is possible that some of us, who are made to learn, do prove to be great learners in the end.

But, let us admit, a great majority of us would like to learn certain subjects and certain skills, which will enable us to earn our wherewithal in an honest manner, respecting the societal norms—even if we may like to challenge them. Call it by any name career prospects or need-achievement, as our younger generation would put it. This is one of the primary objectives we seek in our life. There would be very few who would live and die for their society and learn skills with that objective only. Rarely, we learn consciously in the societal interest—with a view to promoting societal good, to improving the conditions of the society—though we all exhort others, including our children towards this objective, notwithstanding the fact that we do many things in societal interest as we are ourselves a kind of social product. Yet, our activities pursued in our own interest in normal conditions promote the societal good as well, suggests Adam Smith, who would not find ordinary people—the baker, the brewer and the butcher—to engage in their activities with a view to feed their neighbours, which they end up doing. There is a kind of harmony between self-interest, and societal interest. As Boland (1984) put it, self-interest or greed, which is considered a social evil, may turn out to be a virtue rather than a vice in many situations. This is not to suggest that man does not bother about others or no moral instinct. If that were so there would not have existed institutions like family or parentage. Concern for others is the basis of society. Each person is an embodiment of self-interest and moral sentiments (social values). Market sentiments are the other side of our behaviour. But active part in one's ordinary business of life, like choosing a career, may be based on the calculus of what one will get from pursuing a course even if one would use all that he gets on others.

## MOTIVATION FOR TEACHING

Teaching and training are two important ways to facilitate learning and the objectives of teaching and training cannot be divorced from learning. Teaching has to keep the motivation of the learner in mind, which may just be passing the examination! After all, the learner has to choose a subject from a very limited set of options made available to him. Changing/modifying the motivation of such a learner is a great task before the teacher who, if motivated to do so, has no control over the environment and can offer nothing for those who do well. We often ask: is the teacher sufficiently motivated and, if motivated, motivated for what? In subjects where jobs are relatively easy, the teacher can motivate for real learning. Given the job scenario, Economics learners have low motivation for learning in most of the stations. Many of these (us) turn out to be teachers! While some of them improve, the rest keep camouflaging. Whatever damage is left undone is complete when they (we) become part-time academic administrators.

Teaching is one of the vocations we practice for earning our livelihood. Paid jobs command much less respect for one gets paid for one's contribution. It is true that it is one of the vocations that still command respect. Teaching in today's world, where education is treated as industry, is a commodity and therefore it commands some value. Teacher gets paid and yet gets respect, which very few other professions do. Teaching is one of the noble professions. There was a time, and not long ago, the duty of teacher was not so much impartation of knowledge but, as Marshall (1920) put it, shaping the character of the parents of the next generation. That he can do by setting his own example. A teacher does come from the same social milieu from which come the learners. Today, he is more professional and he has developed some kind of detachment with the students. There is nothing wrong in earning from teaching. So long one's entitlement comes from one's contribution, it is fine. The issue is: What do we contribute?

But what for do we teach? Simple answer could be: To earn for our living. That we do from whatever we do! This is an honest answer. What goal (s) do we set for teaching? Making students pass examination may be a simple and honest answer. Then, what is the difference between giving a private tuition, and engaging a tutorial class in a university? There have come up so many coaching institutes to help aspirants in getting admission to professional courses and passing competitive examinations. (Today, there exist tiers of coaching institutions. There are coaching institutions to help your child to get admission in reputed coaching institutions.) Why to have examinations at all? Why not to print degrees and distribute them away as gift or as alms. It means that public educational institutions were supposed to play a rather different role. The situation is far more complex today. But how many of us are really aware of our role as teachers in public educational institutions and of the role of educational institutions? Are we clear in our head what we want our students to do in their lives and that is what will influence our way of teaching and training; it is another matter what they choose to do. In fact, we



might have ourselves our career over a long span of time, depending upon opportunities that came across.

## PURPOSE OF TEACHING ECONOMICS

If not making the learner pass the examination, then what else could be the purpose? There was a time when education had only civilizing role. The learner would enjoy reading and perhaps writing prose and composing poems. Many science laboratories were outside the university system, in which scientists engaged in whatever pleased them. Those days, a lot of Economics developed in the Political Economy Club than in the Cambridge or Oxford campuses.

Earlier, education reached directly from precincts of the universities to homes and it was of that kind. That purpose still continues to hold but its relative importance has diminished. And the (occupational) training that was familial activity has now come to the portals of learning. Today education goes to the home, so to say, through factory, meaning thereby it is, please note, a commercial activity for promoting commercial activities. The real purpose therefore ought to be to help raise the productivity of the learner and trainee as well as the system. The ultimate source of higher earning/income is higher productivity. This is a necessary condition; individual entitlements would require other conditions as well. The two ingredients are not just additive but interactive. It is more or less clear that secular teaching involves concern for raising productivity of the economy. And it is true that over time productivity of many societies and the humanity has increased; teaching—including that of economics—must have played some role and it should be given due credit.

What for do we teach Economics? It has to be realized that even those who do not teach with the express purpose or intention of raising productivity and living standards also wily nilly promote them. For example, a coaching institute may have a very limited purpose, which is to help the enrollee to get through the admission test or competitive examination whereas a medical college or a music college may have a very clear focus on performance in the real life. Teaching of economics should be general enough at the lower end so that the learners feel like analysing and explaining what is happening around but should also lead to develop a quest for more adequate understanding. This way some of those who get a chance to pursue further study turn out to great economists, specialists in certain way and certain fields and some of them choose the field of prescription for sectors, business, government, multilateral bodies, NGO's and public at large. Yet the system should turn out a few others who choose to advance the science with better understanding of the economy, to borrow from Kurien who borrowed from Anderson, Arrow and Pines, as an evolving complex system.

Humans do not just behave instinctually but also deliberately. Therefore, we have a feeling that there is good scope, normally at any point of time, for slimming the gap between the potential and the realization. Most scholars believe the whole purpose of learning is to help society fare better in terms of achievement in material progress or raising living standards. {Vidya, to know, is different than shiksha, to learn.}

Do then I mean that contribution of Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler and Newton, or for matter of Einstein, Hawking, and Chandrasekhar, should just be ignored because they had no express purpose of relieving the toiling masses and only the contribution of Borlaug and Swaminathan, and of Stevenson and Edison who directly contributed to raising the living standards of people, should be extolled? No, far from it. The work of astronomers, geometers and mathematicians may not seem to be contributing for generations together. Litterateurs, philosophers, and artists do contribute to the society in a variety of indirect ways. The contribution of an anthropologist/ archeologist who is just interested in discovering positive laws or finding patterns has not to be ignored simply because he neither has any express purpose of coming out with a solution to a current social problem nor does he come out with one. What do we say about a historian who has little to predict the course at the edge of future?

Economists have been a little harsh when they (such as Hicks, 1976) maintain that we want theories, which will be useful and practically useful though Georgescu-Roegen (1965) concurred with the view that purpose of science in general is not prediction but knowledge for its own sake. Pythagoras thought that science ceased to serve *exclusively* the need of business but has remained ahead of these. Science may yet serve the need of the society. Kurien however wants Economics to be like the science of medicine rather than that of astrophysics.

I should now come back to the main discourse of teaching of economics under the constraints but for the milieu in front. But I think it proper that I should provide some background of teaching of Economics as practiced in the portals of knowledge.

### ECONOMICS AS A SEPARATE DISCIPLINE OF TEACHING

It was not easy for Economics to emerge as a separate discipline of teaching, have asserted many researchers without telling if it was easy for other disciplines. But we know that the science was regarded as late as the second half of nineteenth century to be in infancy (Marshall, 1920). A science having wealth as its subject matter was repugnant for many thinkers in those days. In Marshall's reckoning, 'the conditions of modern life, though more complex, are in many ways more definite than those of earlier times. Business is more clearly marked off from other concerns; the rights of individuals as against others and as against the community are more sharply defined; and above all the emancipation from custom, and the growth of free activity, of constant forethought and restless enterprise, have given a new precision and a new prominence to the causes that govern the relative values of different things and different kinds of labour.' It is in this institutional setting, which is getting more and more sharpened by the day, that Economics started emerging as a science.

It has yet to complete a century as an independent subject of study and investigation anywhere in the world. Though Thomas Robert Malthus was the first Professor of (History and) Political Economy in East India College, appointed nearly two hundred years ago, it was only a hundred years ago that Economics Tripos was inaugurated in Cambridge, which afforded 'economics a place in the University



curriculum alongside classics, history and other great subjects of study'. The term Political Economy, which persisted for a long period because it dealt with those matters and affairs which concerned the State (polis) about 'what ought to be the affairs' of the economy (oikos) but probably not because, as thinks Kulkarni (1956), the tradition wanted to give it a subordinate status. As history reveals, in the days of the Renaissance, many people were using words like economy and economics to refer to the olden Greek usage. In one such book, according to Anikin (1975), economy was defined as 'the art of well governing a man's private house and fortunes' wherein a gentleman was advised to select for his wife a lady who was 'no less useful in the day than agreeable at night'. It was in that kind of environment that Montchretien, a leading exponent of mercantilism, chose the title of his work, *Tract de l'Oeconomie Politique*, to reflect his concerns about wealth of the national economy and the role of the State. Yet, that, it remained subordinate to law in the continent for long is a matter of fact. Later, 'what is' became an important part of enquiry and the term Economics came to assume its due importance.

There was however a distinct realization that this comparatively young science had not yet reached the stage of evolution attained by most of the natural sciences, meaning thereby suggesting that social science could be as definitive as natural science. H. Stanley Jevons (1916), who taught in the University of Allahabad, thought that Economics by then had hardly emerged from the stage of controversy insofar as some fundamental doctrines were concerned, suggesting thereby the hope that there could come a day when this could happen. It becomes therefore difficult for the teacher, he thought, who tries to do justice, to present the standard theory as given in standard books and also state the truth as revealed by his own observations and reasoning. The dichotomy between economics and economy was so revealing.

In India, Economics was tucked to History and later Politics (as was the case elsewhere), which, in view of Kulkarni (1956), behaved as mothers-in-law. However, Jevons (1916) found it a peculiarly important subject of study in India. In his view, Indians were forced to interest themselves in the science as the introduction of European civilization and penetration of industries were causing the most serious economic problems. In his assessment in the early years of the twentieth century, the universities and colleges had realized that there existed great demand for teaching of Economics. In due course of time it assumed a respectable place in social sciences because of its increasing importance and role in the societal affairs.

Practically all universities, saving those established for special subjects or vocations, offer courses in Economics at Undergraduate, Post-graduate and Doctoral levels. Indian Institutes of Technology did offer courses on economics to their undergraduates, who I call, are economics practitioners. The Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur has now started a 5-year integrated M. Sc. Programme in Economics. Most of the school boards now offer it at +2 level, if not at high school level. Though it is an optional subject rather than a compulsory one. And wisely so.

But Economics has made great strides in the course of a century. Economics has got today so many branches and mind-boggling interface with many science, social

science and humanities subjects. Agricultural Economics, Industrial Economics, Labour Economics, Rural Economics and Urban Economics, etc. are interest of the past though they have not ceased to be important. Today we have instead economic anthropology, environmental economics and bio-economics on the one hand and marketing economics and financial economics on the other, which are interspersed with economic sociology, constitutional economics, property rights economics and so on.

However, dis-satisfaction with development of economics and teaching of economics is rather well known though sure there is no disaffection. While quite a few scholars pointed out towards the sheer irrelevance of economics that we have been teaching (Pillai, 1962; Leontief, 1971; Adisheshaiah, 1978; Kurien, 2001), some scholars went to the extent that some of it has to be unlearned (Brown, 1972; Chaubey, 1989) when an economist has to assume practical responsibilities. So much so that Joan Robinson (1972) once remarked that cranks should be preferred over the orthodox for the fact that the former recognize the existence of a problem while the latter shut their eyes. Right in the beginning of teaching of Economics in India, two of the pioneers Jevons and Slater were not happy, as indicated above, with what was happening in the name of teaching Economics. While Jevons had dissatisfaction with standard economic theory, textbooks and method of teaching, Slater had total disaffection with parrot-learning of principles and instead exhorted his students to have extensive surveys of his own villages. Gilbert Slater at the University of Madras started a tradition of studying village conditions in South India, to which ample references are made in Kumarappa's writings in 1930's like Economic Survey of Matar Taluka (District of Kheda) and Why Village Movement? Thus we find there were two schools: Jevons' school and Slater's school— pursuing different courses for study and teaching. In the first case the teacher was baffled to relate the textbook material with his observations and the emphasis was on the science, in the second he did not face it as the emphasis was empirical reality.

It seems that it is this discontent with the sterility of content, which has made Economics align with other disciplines in a more professional manner.

We divide this discontent on what we teach into two parts: discontent over content of curriculum and discontent over conduct of teaching economics. Within contents we broadly cover Economic Theory, Quantification of Economics and Indian Economics. And within teaching we would cover again these three areas along with some teaching through practical sessions.

### DISCONTENT OVER CONTENTS

Next logical sequence to clinch the issue is as to what do we teach or in what do we train our students? Broadly speaking, we can say: Economic Theory or Principles of Economics and Indian Economics or Indian Economy. The many courses/streams/papers/modules that we teach at different levels are different facets of these two main divisions or sometimes a combination of the two.

There has always been discontent about this dismal science, as Carlyle called it, yet it emerged as a discipline. But it is a solid fact that despite protests over content, methodology and approach, Economics surged ahead and is surging ahead. Some of those who largely swore by mainstream economic theory suspected about its usefulness for the economies like India and so much so that some of them considered its teaching as mis-education.

Most of the scholars who earlier addressed to this issue had a utilitarian view of economics education, as expounded in the philosophy of education, and exclusively devoted to the question of content as to what ought to be taught so that learners are able to help the Indian economy grow. Many foreign scholars, particularly the British such as Joan Robinson (1960) also had similar views and it was regarding economics theory, which, in their view, did not adequately address to the problems of countries like India. Kurien (1992, 1996), who thinks that the role of economic theories is to analyse economic problems and to be of aid to economic policies, finds that there has been a sharp schism between the world of problems and the world of theories. In many excellent centres of economics teaching and research, to use Ashok Guha's phrases, there exists a tendency of playing scholastic game of logic-chopping and puzzle-solving. Hicks (1965) and Sen (1970), both great theorists themselves, pointed out that, despite great motivation for work towards practical policy issues for growth, much of growth theory dealt with esoteric issues or class-room exercises. Their occupation may then perhaps be likened to chess enthusiasts. Even development economics, which grew out of policy concerns for developing economies, got entrapped into formalistic structure.

Relevance of what we teach to our students is an oft-repeated question. The issue of relevance can be looked at from various angles. One could be angle of curiosity with which we look at various natural phenomena/events and try to discover laws or patterns — such as movements of celestial bodies like astronomers or behaviour pattern of birds like ornithologists. In that sense, does it help us in understanding human conduct of economic activities or economic affairs of human societies? Our interest could be to find out whether or not it helps us to understand economic affairs of our society and its sub-societies. This could be the scholastic view. Very few scholars in economics hold on to it but very many of them in centers of higher learning do practice it.

Another could be the angle of applicability, which could be said to be the professional view. Whether this will help us devise prescription for betterment of the people— improving the lot of the poor, lessening unemployment of the employable, suggesting ways to produce the employable, has been the question in such discourses. State being in the background, there was always a debate whether the State could be called upon to intervene in the economic affairs and if yes, how? Whether policies devised for intervention are proper and will be effective? Whether adequate care of the institutional reality and motivation of human actors has been built in the model before deriving the policy prescription? For example, Kuiren (his running theme since 1969) finds that for a large part of self-employment households/enterprises saving may be an active function of investment opportunities in business rather than residual from consumption or interest rate available in bank. And the policy prescription is 'open bank,

mobilize savings and lend to somebody' as if there exists demand in the market across sectors.

Today, we can take perhaps a little larger view. Earlier, besides teaching, economists were supposed to advise the government or choose to advocate or champion a particular cause. The question is whether this will help us helping those who turn to us for achieving their economic goals—like entering a particular market, promoting a particular product line, getting patent rights, advising on pollution control, so on and so forth.

### ***RELEVANCE OF ECONOMIC THEORY***

When some people debunk certain propositions with the remark that 'it is all theoretical' they little realize that this proposition itself is theoretical. In science subjects, teaching of theory and practical go together but in the case of social science subjects, many think, they often divorce. Pragmatists and dogmatists both debunk theories. But what do we mean by theory? Can there be a science without theory? Surely this indignation emanates from inapplicability of the apparatus created for the very purpose. So long the apparatus remains far removed from reality, it will receive such flakes— all the more in social sciences because in the case of societal affairs we can relate things, with ease, even if vaguely with our own experiences.

Theories are explanations of certain phenomena in terms of causal relationships between certain variables deduced logically. We can include in this category empirical patterns observed with some amount of regularity. Admittedly, the first one is grounded in mental logic and the second one is grounded in empirical world of nature. In substantive cases, the two have to come together. Gravitational force is an empirical reality but the law of gravitation is a mental device. World would not have existed without the force but its existence came to be recognized barely four hundred years ago and for a quite a long time people did not believe a body could be pulled by another without any contact. Theories are about why happens of what happens and therefore what is likely to happen under the given circumstances. Should the circumstances change, including human intervention, the course of events may change in a predictable direction provided the theory/model characterizes the system well or at least it is properly contextualised. But in social sciences, as Kurien points out, there is distinct possibility of multiple equilibria but we keep insisting on finding existence, uniqueness and stability conditions of equilibrium. For many even, solubility of system has become so important that they would change the closure conditions in order to find solution.

In social domain, it is often emphasized that theories are rarely perfectly right or totally wrong. Sometimes though, alternatives are equally attractive. But from the point of view of applicability they may be appropriate or inappropriate insofar as policy implications are to be derived from it. Many do say that such and such theory is good or bad. An inappropriate theory with logical policy device may do wrong and so can an inappropriately derived policy from an appropriate theory. Distinction between variables

and parameters may often be missed. Since agents are not a part of the game in standard theorems, the solutions often come from outside.

There is a distinction, some scholars feel, between conceptual theories and empirical theories or let us say between conceptual science and empirical science. While conceptual sciences are based on plausible, intuitive axioms and logical deductions are carried out, in the views of such scholars, empirical sciences are grounded in empirical reality. A conceptual science is deductive, formal, abstract, general, universal and eternal. It is irrespective of matter, time and space. An empirical theory on the other hand is not a pure mental construct; it thrives on objects, events and phenomena. Except pure mathematics, there is a clear interface between empirics and logic. Which comes first, logic or observation, is a difficult chicken-egg question. A theory in the social domain has to be grounded in the reality of the society, as manifested through cultures, traditions, institutions and values because a man's behaviour is largely shaped by his society. A social theory in the social domain is therefore little likely to be universal or eternal whereas a science theory in many cases could be universal and eternal both. Yet, there is something and something different. This something common is what makes science possible; and it is this varied manifestation, which makes it necessary. A pertinent suggestion in this discourse comes from Kurien is that the formulation of 'if P then T' is fine in the sciences of essence but in empirical sciences it is better to go for 'since P therefore T', where P and T stand for postulates and theories.

There have been schools that believed in universalism and eternalism in social domain. Noting that in different phases of development different institutions emerge and different policy prescriptions were held out, the belief in eternalism waned but the faith in universalism continued. In fact, eternalism took a different shape and it was that all societies will eventually trace the same path and Marxists called it historical determinism. Even if that were true there could be nothing social-empirico, which could be universal. If something is not eternal because society goes on changing, then it cannot be universal either in social-empirico context. As in the physical world, so in the social context, there could be phenomena, which exist but their existence is not known and as scientist we try to discover them. But in the social context, there could emerge new phenomena too. Societies are evolving while scientific paradigms chosen often remain mechanical.

In social sciences, it is often remarked, there exist simultaneously a number of theories for a given set of phenomena; new ones emerge but the old ones rarely die. There abound alternative theories. Rarely one theory completely replaces the other. Preference for certain theories does not come from the facts alone but also from ideology. As there abound alternative ideologies, there will remain alternative theories. But even methodology of construction and validation, think some scholars, may matter a great deal. As my colleague Pranab Banerji would like to summarize, a given theory is product of four constituents: (a) the world-view, (b) method of theoretical construction, (c) method of validation and (d) social utility. The world-view could well be the philosophical underpinning or ideological orientation. Even the choice of methodology may be guided by ideological inclination. Social utility may not be a constituent but a desirable feature.

It may so happen that these alternative theories adopt so very different concepts and terminology due to ideological reasons that there could be little debate possible between them.

It also happens that new phenomena arise and it is suddenly discovered that dominant, mainstream theoretical setup has no answer. So much so that Keynes had remarked in his introduction to the series of Cambridge Economic Handbooks that the Theory of Economics does not furnish a body of settled conclusions immediately applicable to policy and it is a method rather the doctrine, an apparatus of mind, a technique of thinking. Thus it is a mode of thinking rather than a set of theories. According to Dasgupta (1980), 'the function of economic theory is to formulate questions concerning economic phenomena, and to indicate the mode of answering them. Questions that are relevant to economic theory derive from phenomena as they occur in an economy; they must, if they are to elicit answers, which could be used for interpretation of reality. The development of economic theory may thus be viewed in terms of the character of questions that economists have aimed at answering from time to time.' In fact, he prefers to call revolutions as landmarks and the periods between landmarks as epochs, each characterized by a major school. These schools represent, he says, systems of economic theory, which differ in the nature of problems that they seek to explain as well as the techniques, which they choose to employ.

Does that mean the economists seek to answer the problems of the contemporary history? Perhaps largely they do so. Only they pose them as eternal. Soon they face the problem of not being able to explain and to suggest policies appropriate to the problems in hand. There is deluge and there is turmoil. This is what explains the Keynesian revolution, which reversed the classical prescription. Robbins (1935) still held steadfast that 'it is a well-known generalization of theoretical economics that a wage above the equilibrium level necessarily involves unemployment ... history of this country since the War is one long indication of its accuracy'. Keynes (1936) therefore held classicals as Euclidean geometers in a non- Euclidean world. But why did the great depression occur was in true sense never explained, never forecasted.

That not all but a number of theories are grounded in the historical reality of their times, is well recognized. For instance, subsistence theory of wages or iron law of wages reflects reality of the period when agricultural revolution together with the enclosure movement and mechanization of agriculture deprived the freeholders of their land and released a large body of landless labourers, which were not to be absorbed in manufacturing since industrialization was itself in its early stages. With the progress of industrialization and emergence of trade unions, theory of wages changed within half a century. Earlier, demand had no role in determination of wages but only in that of employment. (And the poor laws were taking care of the unemployed.) This may still be true of certain segments of labour market in countries like India! Further, much of the basis of labour supply curve does not hold in self-employment or in noble professions. No teacher would ever feel incurring disutility right from the moments he starts teaching. Many a time there would be cases where one would have mental satisfaction (consumption) and physical fatigue (production).



The same could be said about the construct of perfect competition in the market because the conditions prevailing in the third quarter of eighteenth century when industrialization and mass production was yet to be visible in England. Perfect competition actually mimicked the reality of those days. Monopolies were not 'natural' but State-sponsored—such as the East India Company. From these instances, Dasgupta (1980) suggests that an economic theory has thus to be judged, not in absolute terms, but in relation to the peculiar setting to which it belongs and to the purpose which it is expected to serve. He had much earlier suggested that in teaching the theory and tools, the historical background has invariably to be given (Dasgupta, 1960).

This is a great simplification in such assertions because there were thinkers who tried to chart out the course of events—in terms of tendencies. And there were others who, deliberately or innocently, pressed their theories to buttress the perpetuation of certain kinds of relations and institutions. Many economists of Classical Political Economy period were as great propagandists as they were analysts. Some of them accepted certain paradoxes but others put them under the carpets or consigned them to footnotes. For example, as Joan Robinson (1971) points out that 'the linchpin of the orthodox defense of laissez faire was the doctrine that, under conditions of perfect competition, a free market will always allocate resources efficiently', which she says was never convincing. It is only under conditions of full employment and full utilization of capacity. Not only that these terms are not well defined, in usual sense; also there is nothing to assure that they ever exist. Under such tenuous assumptions, grandiloquence is built up. Somewhere lurk in certain ideologies and may be vested interests. As Joan Robinson further points out, the orthodox theory describes the market demand for commodities in terms of tastes of consumers, not the distribution of income amongst them. The prices of factors of production are derived from the prices of commodities. Do they redistribute purchasing power among the consumers? Textbooks will avoid answering such questions, if asked, by saying 'it will be discussed later in another chapter how incomes are distributed'.

The term efficiency is used as a condition when, for a given combination of resources, one cannot produce more of one commodity without sacrificing certain amount of another commodity. Production possibility frontier depicts the points describing the maximum amount of a commodity for a given combination of all other commodities for a given configuration of resources. Each commodity has a marginal opportunity cost in terms of the sacrifice of other commodities, which would be required in order to produce a little more of this one. The same is defined for a firm in terms of minimum cost for a given output, where cost is in terms of expenses rather in those of physical resources. The expenses depend on the amount of physical resources—intermediate and primary inputs—and their prices, which are commodity prices for intermediate inputs and factor prices for primary inputs. These markets may not be competitive. We may further recollect that all issues raised by Sraffa in the late twenties of the goneby centuries regarding economies of scale were brushed aside in order to favour the theorem of automaticity.



Kurien (2001) posed two issues from our everyday observations, from our common experience. One is whether it is scarcity that leads to choice or abundance necessitates it. While common experience suggests the latter, we go on teaching in classes the former. We do not even discuss it. It goes on as a monologue and the other side parrots it unthinkingly. The other is from the offer made by a vendor for larger discounts for larger purchase, suggesting downward sloping supply curve. Do we ever discuss this behaviour of the trader, the vendor? Is it because of opportunity cost of time, as would seem to be the case of morning vegetable market (*sattee* or *haat*)? Or, is it because holding inventory has a cost? Or, the explanation lies in the fact the trader is a different animal from the producer or rather the manufacturer. In the theory of history, Hicks gives due consideration for emergence of this intermediary. Kurien (1996) has cleverly distinguished the role of trader from that of producer and pointed out towards conditions of his emergence in the evolution of economy. We may note that no farmer but many manufacturers may produce on demand. So it seems that rising marginal cost curve for the quantities above the minimum average cost and flat average cost line for quantities before that point constitutes the supply offer of an individual manufacturer or producer. But one may also ask whether resources are waiting in queue for employment? But have we ever checked up the behaviours of manufacturers and traders of their commodities?

We teach free entry and free exit of firms as important conditions of perfectness in competition because that would permit reallocation of resources (and that takes place in the short run) and prove market as an efficient allocation mechanism of resources. But what are the real resources? They are machines and equipment, and carpenter and computer programmers, teachers of economics and dance masters. Can they be reallocated with all that great ease between a mosquito repellent factory and an institution that produces classical musicians and dancers.

Neoclassical approach came under heavy attack but no replacement could be found. Scholars charged it for sterility but were charmed with its logical elegance. While historical school of Germany and institutional school of America gave it a thorough challenge, their analytical grip was perhaps loose. Use neoclassical economic tools but concede empirical reality is the answer by the new institutional economics. Multitude of transactions is not close to instantaneous transactions as hypothesized by neoclassical economics. Long-term contracts not only in factor markets (long in existence) but also in goods markets make the matter far more complex; but economics refused to entertain them till the other day. Lack of information, existence of information asymmetry, existence of moral hazards, and therefore existence of a variety of institutions and enforcement agencies have now been addressed more adequately. If not whole of experimental economics at least the part dealing with game-theoretic approach also shows some promise.

These are some of the illustrations of inapplicability of some of the important theories in the territory of their origin. While classicals were replaced by neoclassicals through analytically resolving some of the paradoxes the former had posed, by clever device of mathematics of the margin. That put aside some of the Marxian questions by

the device of methodological individualism, which subverted the notion of classes, which the classicals were concerned with. Pure theorists, devoted to logic and mathematics and searching for universals (Walras) and general principles (W.S. Jevons), found no place for human beings and social relationship in their approach to economics. Walras was happy to note that Adam Smith's economics was perfected in less than a hundred years by neoclassicals whereas journey of astronomy took two hundred years from Kepler to Newton and Laplace as did that of mechanics from Galileo to d'Alembert and Lagrange. For Walras, pure economics was 'a science which resembled the physico-mathematical sciences in every respect' and therefore the 'pure theory of economics ought to take over from experience certain (real-) type of concepts, like those of exchange, supply, demand, market, capital, income, productive services and products...should then abstract and define ideal-type concepts in terms of which it carries reasoning. The return to reality should not take place until the science is completed and then only with a view to practical applications (Walras, quoted from Kurien, 1996).

First major challenge to the grandiloquence of laissez faire, supposedly espoused by the classicals and buttressed by the neoclassicals through methodological individualism, was posed by the scene of the Great Depression in the late twenties of the century gone by, which made the capitalist class to lose along with the labour class. State was called out to reverse its role from inaction to action. But fifty years later, State was again told to retrace its steps and to act just as watchdog. And it was universal prescription while different economies are at different levels of development, have different societal complexes and political setups, and face different problems (for instance, developed countries face unemployment and developing countries face poverty).

However, it is an eye opener that much of the attempt to make neo-classical economics compatible with the observed behaviour of the changes in the output as a result of changes in primary inputs of capital stock and labour input, was found totally unsatisfactory. Different techniques are resulting in so different results that even the direction is not known forget about the magnitude. Felipe and McCombie argue, quotes Dasgupta (2004), that the structure of economic concepts and relations built around classical and neo-classical economic thinking, is incapable of dealing with economic phenomena evolved over time.

These are some of the illustrations of how weak had been the foundation of the economic theory as developed in the West—particularly in Britain. It talked of resources, technology and tastes but not so much of institutions of production and distribution. May be there were many to point out that some of the institutions might have outlived their utility. And this fear did not allow the mainstream economists to discuss the theories of institutions except that of the State. Received theory is therefore not expected to be completely applicable to Indian situation. Similarly received wisdom from the Washington Consensus for universal prescription has to be double-checked. Yet, there are portions and parts, tools and apparatus, which come handy for many an analysis in economic arena.

## RELEVANCE OF QUANTIFICATION

In order to save space and time I am using the term of 'quantification' somewhat loosely to encompass the tendencies of using mathematics, statistics and econometrics in economic investigations of societal phenomena, processes and events.

Statistics has been in use for building up a large part of economic theory for generalizing patterns and tendencies as well as to provide appropriate assumptions for model building. Mathematics is used as a tool to condense abstract reasoning. Let us start with mathematics.

Use of mathematics in Economics dates back to late eighteenth century with mathematician and philosopher Cournot (1838), followed by engineer Dupuit (1844) and economist Gossen (1854) and was done over again, according to Marshall (1920, p.85n), by Jevons and by Menger in 1871 and a little later by Walras in 1872. Edgeworth, Pareto, Wickstead, Auspitz, Lieben and Pantaleoni were Mathematical Economists in the beginning of the twentieth century. It was only in the thirties that there followed the textbooks on what could be called Mathematical Economics.

Is mathematics needed? Mathematics is a non-verbal language, written with the help of signs rather than with letters of an alphabet. It obeys logical rules and is often able to transcend the possibilities offered by verbal logic. But then it is a purely intellectual system, the elements of which are intellectual and fictitious in nature. Then the question is: if economics is not inherently mathematical, do we really simplify matters by using mathematics or still more importantly, do we gain in understanding with its use? Is it methodologically efficient in terms of (a) intellectual labour, (b) clarity of exposition, and (c) accuracy, asks Brand (1961). However, these questions may neither be eternal nor universal as our mental equipment is itself an evolving complex. When Cournot wrote and people were not sufficiently exposed to mathematical equipment and as a result his work did not catch the attention in his time. Dupuit had only a little better luck. Gossen's work could not be sold partly because his writing was 'heavy' for the readers of his day and copies of his book were actually destroyed.

In late nineteenth century, wrote Marshall in the preface to the first edition of his book *Principles of Economics: An Introductory Volume*: 'the chief use of pure mathematics in economic questions seems to be helping a person to write down quickly, shortly and exactly, some of his thoughts for his own use; and to make sure that he has enough, and only enough premises for his conclusions (that is, his equations are neither more nor less in number than his unknowns)'. He did not recommend the use of mathematics for communication. Yet the fact is that today, after a century, most people know that little mathematics. This generation would easily tell Marshall that they know that equations in question have to be independent as well, not only that their number has to equal the number of unknowns.

If we mean by theory (i) a statement with a (ii) set of assumptions through (iii) a logical analysis, leading to a (iv) set of conclusions or predictions, say Archibald and

Lipsey (1976), then mathematics help us in the third step. They narrate an interesting story of a conference, which they attended:

The first paper was given by a mathematical economist who presented a four-equation model of the behaviour of firms, deduced all its testable implications and showed how he had gone to test some of them. Because of mathematical nature of the tools used to make deductions, the paper was regarded by many of the audience as being 'impossibly difficult'. The second paper was given by a literary economist. Here the discussion centred (in purely verbal terms) on an important applied problem concerning the workings of the monetary system. The model involved had not been formally specified but must, at a guess, have involved about a dozen unknowns, and their relations over time, as governed by a set of unspecified simultaneous differential equations. Proper specification and solution would have been very difficult. As things stood, we did not even know if the model *had* a solution, but, because the argument was all conducted verbally, no one seemed to think that economics was difficult. When an essentially complex theory is loosely and informally sketched, the intellectual effort subsequently devoted to its verbal analysis can only be a waste of time. No one would possibly have answered any of the questioned posed in that discussion about the implications of the model being discussed without a formal specification and the application to it of some quite complex mathematical analysis. To pretend otherwise was self-delusion (Archibald and Lipsey, 1977, p.10).

Any theory is based on a model, which is an abstraction of reality, a simplification of the real complex. The domain of human affairs is no less complex rather much more complex than much wider sphere of physical world. Early economists saw some resemblance between mechanics and economics and found it expedient to use geometry and algebra—let us say analytical geometry—to capture simultaneous operation of a number of relationships. To capture the idea of incrementalism, calculus (including calculus of variations) was harnessed. Later for checking existence, stability and uniqueness, mathematicians choosing to work in economics used topology. Operations Research and Decision Making came to play a larger role in practical problem whereas Games Theory challenged the very basic assumptions of microeconomic theory, particularly with regard to competition. Axiomatization is one of the latest trends. Experimental economics is also emerging.

Macroeconomic modeling, general equilibrium modeling, inter-industry modeling have been for quite a long stretch of time occupying the space in economics journals before being partly replaced by inter-disciplinary research where economics plays a significant role. Many of these exercises did provide some inputs to policy-making, including inappropriate policy advices, some were pure light shedding exercises.

Of late some scholars are recognizing cords or asserting different approaches. For example, evolutionary paradigm is better suited to economies than mechanical; disquilibrating forces are more dominant than equilibrating ones; processes through time rather than snapshot situations deserve more attention; short-term dynamics rather than

long-term statics should be given priority. In some such cases, mathematics will be difficult or will not be easily applicable.

Many asserted and many others disagreed that quantitative relationships dealt with in economics are inherently mathematical in nature and therefore mathematics is a great aid as a manipulative tool. Many even doubted that use of mathematics in all cases simplified the statements but many other asserted mathematical models opened the way to new understanding. So much so Bodenhorn and Ropke have been cited to remark that the trend towards mathematical frameworks in economics may be associated with an application of good mathematical assumptions but poor economics (Brand, 1961). Only for those who understand economics, their intuition gets guided with use of mathematics; the rest get lost in the wilderness of mathematics.

Two tendencies have been observed in the recent research explorations. One, some of us take delight in solving curiosa rather than real problems and some of us are more interested in applying the techniques we are adept at. Flight in fancy and creation of pseudo-world of its own is the problem with researchers infatuated with application of an analytical edifice. In a general context, Sen (1970) observed that much of modern growth theory (which is quite mathematical) dealt with esoteric issues despite immense practical motivation in the aftermath of the war. Dilemma of mathematical form versus economic content looms large in our research and percolates down to teaching. Seductiveness of the form is irresistible. In its pursuit researcher may be tempted to forget economics content. Economic Theory is fated for a long mathematical future, felt Gerard Debreu (1987).

It may be pointed out that some of the early economists, like Marshall and Edgeworth, had also noted abuses of mathematics. It is well to remember Albert Einstein who pointed out that insofar as mathematical statements relate to reality they are uncertain and insofar as they are certain they do not relate to reality. We should therefore encourage judicious use of mathematics and discourage its senseless use.

Statistics is the social science, said somebody, which is totally amenable to mathematics. Statistics is the dataset, is a science of inference, and is plural of sample attribute statistic. Generalization and inference from empirical observations, casual and systematic, have been the foundation of practically all of secular inquiries. Economics as a science is a latecomer. Yet, it was Engel's law of demand (1857) rather than Marshall's law of demand (1890), which made first appearance. Even before Engel there were Eden, Petty and others. But there were no regressions and correlations, which came from biometrics.

Attempts at building up national accounts dates back to Gregory King (1600). Story of index numbers is a little less old but that of death rates and birth rate is pretty old. How did the poor live and what kind of movement did take place for and between different classes of workers, were statistical enquiries. Thus, measurement of microvariables and macrovariables and their aggregations had always captured our attention. The interface between underlying theory and the index is somewhat new but important. The historical sequence in teaching would be good enough.

Econometrics evolved out of many practical problems and paradoxes. Many simplified models did great service if we consider them for their operational value. Haavelmo changed the course by initiating probability method in econometrics. Chakravarty (1985) quotes Samuelson at length to impress that the practitioner of an intermediately hard science like economics must come to terms with methodological problems while in a hard science he can afford not to bother so much as the subject has self-cleaning property.

Whatever it is, let us admit, that our teaching of econometrics in many stations is so defective that the student has no clue as to where and how he should apply his knowledge and interpret the results and try to explore their implications.

There is a good dose of economic statistics in applied economics branches. There is usually a paper on elementary statistics. However, most of the text books in statistics, even if titled as Statistics for Economics or Statistics for Economists, have rarely to do anything with economic statistics. That way, demography does much better and education does somewhat better. Economics teachers of statistics still count marbles and play cards rather than measure road-length or weigh sugar. They find out correlation between scores in mathematics and statistics or judges' score on beauty parades rather than between poverty and inequality or between urban poverty and rural poverty or even between income and consumption or money supply and national income.

### ***RELEVANCE OF INDIAN ECONOMICS***

How relevant is the content of Indian Economics that has been taught over the century? Indian Economics is an odd phrase and not well defined. It can be taken to be an Economics which is germane to Indian soil, that is her ethos, temperament and institutions and therefore applicable to India where India represents not the current political boundary of India but a vast cultural expanse. Institutions are the basis to distinguish the economic systems, not the technology it uses, asserted Georgescu-Roegen (1965), for two systems of different institutional make-ups may still use the same technology. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. may be clear examples. However Marx pointed out that there may be unique relationship between technology (productive forces) and institutional set-up (production relations); to put more precisely there is some unique sequence of progress of the two and there is constant conflict as the two do not progress in consonance. We go here in this section by Georgescu-Roegen.

Do we have European Economics or American Economics? There is surely a British Economy, and an American Economy. There is nothing like British Economics though what we teach has generally descended to us from Britain and of late from America. The theories/thoughts from the continent came to us filtered through the British eyes in English language. Yet, there is nothing like British Economics. But there exist Slavery Economics, Feudal Economics, Capitalist Economics, and Socialist Economics. Indian Economics in that sense could at most mean Gandhian Economics or Kautilya Economics. Even Buddhist Economics, half-heartedly promoted by Schumacher, would



capture only a few features of Indian reality. Nobody ever called Gadhian Economics, as exposted by J.C. Kumarappa and Sriman Narayan Agarwal, as Indian Economics.

Even in modern sense, Indians have contributed to economics for close a century and a half, beginning with Dadabahi Naoroji, Romesh Chandra Dutt and Mahadeo Govind Ranade. While earlier economists were seized with Indian problems, later ones—the ones that are of note—became more interested in extensions of economics theorems. Speaking of contributions to Indian economic analysis, Bhagwati and Charkravarty (1972) noted that economists in India discussed practically every conceivable problem but also pointed out towards the literature contained in reports of numerous committees and commissions. We should include in it the work of the National Planning Committee. It is important to remember that in India professional economists replaced business leaders quite early in economic writings.

When Ranade used the phrases *Indian Political Economy* and *Indian Economics*, he wished to point out that Indian institutions, customs and mores, and value-systems as also her modes of thoughts and reasoning were so very different from the Western ones that the economic theory evolved there has hardly any direct applicability to the Indian scene. For example, he points out that ryots' rent is different than farmer's rent and therefore Ricardian rent theory was inapplicable here. The stand was so strongly reinforced by her unique institutions of caste and joint family and tradition-rooted nature of people. But it is curious to note and it should be pointed out that in certain respects he found that Indian economy was closer to that of the other European countries, such as Germany and France, and America, which were not so industrialised as Britain was. Not laissez faire, he asserted, but protection to industries, promotion of credit institutions and help to agriculture were the appropriate measures needed. Yet, he thought that some day our economy would be like theirs and their economic theory would be applicable.

Many textbooks started pouring in with the title of *Indian Economics*. One such was authored by Pramathnath Banerjea and published in 1911 by Calcutta University. From the perusal, one finds that it is a largely factual description of the Indian Economy rather than theoretical construction of the economic life of people in this part of the globe or even an analytical description. It is this tradition, which has been followed by other textbook writers till date, notwithstanding existence of a good amount of theoretical research in various sectors of the Indian economy. It seems that H.S. Jevons (1916) was dismissing such books and was unhappy. One popular textbook, which ruled for long was by Jathar and Beri (1936), which held that *Indian Economics* is generally understood as a study of Indian economic problems—understanding the economic situation and finding out means and methods of improving it. A good short description of the economic facts with some institutional perspective, old and modern, it failed to relate with the theory in existence but passed in educating about problems with fragmentary treatment. Bhabatosh Datta once remarked in a lecture in Calcutta that when he was student there was hardly any interaction between the teachers of the two compartments of the economics course, Economy Theory and Indian Economics.



It seems Dr. S.V. Ketkar (1914) had given profound thought about *Indian Economics* almost at the same time teaching of Economics was about to begin in India. The full title of his essay is very indicative of his thought. It read as *An Essay on Indian Economics as its relates to social, psychic, political and living and working conditions in India and on the laws of economic evolution and on the acceptability of socialistic measures and the future outlook*. Without an independent science of Indian Economics, he maintained, it was not possible for us to effectively solve the economic and social problems of India. He was not apologetic as was Ranade but proud about caste system. He regarded it as a unique and bold experiment of the Hindus to organize an extremely tolerant society that could expand without disturbing social equilibrium. This unique contribution to world culture could not be dispensed with. India was not only distinct from England and other European countries but from all other countries of the world. He held that India was so unique that her conditions could be explained by an independent discipline of *Indian Economics* (Sovani, 1974).

In 1924 Gadgil would not agree with him and doubted the necessity of a separate discipline because Ketkar did not respect the boundaries of economic science. The differences were not so material, said Gadgil, as to require a separate discipline though economic processes would work out with greater friction. But in 1942 when Indian Economic Conference chose to discuss the topic, Gadgil tended to agree with Ketkar.

Lakdawala (1977) felt that continental size and variety of the Indian economy presented a considerable obstacle to its comprehension. While export-oriented simple models developed in the West were of no help, factual data across regions and over time were so scanty to move ahead.

There was another school of thought impressed by Western thought, which did believe in universality of economic laws. For them, including Dadabhai Naoroji, the differences between the West and East would melt away with development and the end of alien rule. Part of the reason was that these writers were so engrossed with the problems of their day and had little time to question the theory than the policy of the day. As late as 1974, quite unmindful of the fact that their own theories were not eternal, Sovani (1974) felt economic laws were universally applicable but they worked with frictions in soils like India.

Role of economists in India changed after Independence from one of protest to construction. In initial years, practically all economists of note were associated with the policy-making exercises. Yet, have we, for example, articulated sufficiently well that there may be a case where a family is 'over-employed and yet poor', have we ever care to alter wage-employment oriented western economic theory to incorporate self-employed entrepreneurship, or have we noticed that unemployment rate has a negative relationship with participation rate? Is it not late in the day that we could notice the practice of efficiency-wage or relationship between product-market and input-market?

What do we really teach in the name of *Indian Economics* to our students at school and college levels? It is largely a factual description of the Indian economy in terms of numbers, with good dose of institutional structure once upon a time such as land

tenures. Here it would be pertinent to mention about Gilbert Slater, who was appointed in December 1915 to head the newly created Department of Economics in the University of Madras. Distressed as he was with the fact that learning of economics in Madras at that time (that was true elsewhere too) consisted of 'a series of unintelligible theories to be learnt parrot fashion from Marshall's *Principles*', he felt that central objective of the study of economics in India should be to understand 'the causes and remedies for Indian poverty' (Kurien, 1992, p.278). And for this he launched his students for the study of particular villages—their own villages if possible.

To come back, in mainstream Indian Economics, we give enormously vivid description of the economy in terms of numbers. Different facts are seldom related with each other and rarely juxtaposed with theory. Actually, theory required for interpreting economic facts or economic history is often of a little higher level and not very definitive. But involvement of students in lower classes in trying to interpreting data will make enormous sense out of it. Sensible compilation and classification of economic data along with use of elementary mathematical operations and graphical portrayal, interpretation thereof and inference therefrom, do involve some kind of theoretical analysis, which we may not be consciously aware of. A heap of data, of any set of facts, is garbage. We make sense out of it only when we systematically arrange it. Let us not think that there is a unique way of doing it but accept plurality and as teachers let us devise our own methods to the extent the environments permit.

Finally, let me note, we are found awfully ignoring local and provincial matters as if they are no concern to it. One reason could be that factual information is missing. The other could be that we do not visualize the role of teaching economics, which could be more than knowledge. With PRIs and ULBs firmly placed, local economies deserve to be better appreciated and understood. Some data about agricultural crops, their outturns and yield, their industrial disposal could be and should be locally generated. So could be the case for commercial establishments or manufacturing units in informal sector. Private and public services in education and health and public health measures could be easily studied. As a secondary source, one could use the district statistical handbooks, district census handbooks. Students with this knowledge would prove great assets for local governance. And with this knowledge, they could turn out to be better leaders when they transcend to provincial and national scene.

Provincial statistics need to be better spread. It is a shame that we do not know the rate of growth, rate of saving, amount of investment, output of wheat, minimum wage rate, contribution of industry when it comes to telling about U.P. but we know a lot better about the U.K., which is not even half the size of UP. It is a duty of the State governments and subordinate offices in districts and blocks to disseminate statistics and other information—collected, compiled and processed at their end—to the intelligentsia, analysts, teachers of the area to which it belongs. Horizontal spread rather than vertical scattering would pay still better. Many districts are now having their websites, which need to be enriched and need to be widely used.

## DESIGN FOR CONDUCT OF TEACHING

Discontent over conduct could be four-fold: (i) improper content of syllabi, (ii) defective pedagogy of teaching, (iii) ill-written textbooks, and (iv) absence of practical sessions. Demand for economics learning, in terms of knowledge and skills, may come from business, government and non-government organisations. Societal demand may deviate and diverge from the sum of perceived individual demands, which we may call market demand. Reading of societal demand in terms of components and depth is an important exercise and it should be carried out. Social institutions have to intervene to bridge the quantitative and qualitative gap and may have to give signals to other players about the kind of orientation that is needed. Supply of economics teaching has a number of sources—formal, non-formal and semi-formal. A certain part is learnt on the job. We shall largely deal with formal channel of supply though for a certain section of students some knowledge is available on the inter-net.

We seem to believe whatever is needed is already in existence, which is not the case. There may also be a lot of stale stuff for discard. We know that we cannot create a new economics whenever we want, nor can we wait till new economics arrives. We can therefore adopt the syllabus that suit us better and adopt that style of teaching that knowledge imparted becomes more relevant. In fact there exists a lot of research, which has not been but can be harnessed in teaching and in writing textbooks. [I cannot but briefly touch upon the broad contours in the course of this lecture.]

### **SYLLABI**

Syllabi for different levels have to be different, is well accepted by all but syllabi for different boards/universities have to be different is not digested by some of us. There has to be product differentiation depending upon the student-clientele. Yet, there has to be a general background of the economy starting at the local level and gradually reaching the international/global level. There has to be knowledge of certain concepts, basic principles, and analytical skills. But they should be couched in such terms and with such background that the students are able to relate them with the life they live when they are at lower level. When they are at higher level, they should be able to see connection between what they study in the institution and what they otherwise read in the newspaper or view on the television. Some of them may work for media while others may work for business, government and teaching. Few may go for research related to different aspects.

Economics is taught and rightly so at school stage. But Economics that is taught at +2 level, say as per the CBSE syllabus, is a diminutive version of what is taught at higher level rather than forming a base on which further structure is built upon. There is little graduation in the structure. School teachers have a feeling that teachers of higher levels are pushing down their burden. They may be right. Students at +2 levels are currently being taught (i) Microeconomics, (ii) Macroeconomics, (iii) Indian Economic Development, and (iv) Statistics. While Statistics may not be sufficiently economics-ized, Microeconomics and Macroeconomics may not be sufficiently Indianized. But more important issue is different. Most of these students may drop out without knowing any thing about their local economy or provincial economy while they might have known

how the external debt in national currency changes when exchange market behaves in a certain manner. Why should they know about the happenings, phenomena, events, and problems as well as institutions and organizations, which surround their own economic surrounding, only at the research level? In a large country like India, it is desirable that there is a judicious mix of local, regional, provincial, national and international economy. The golden principle is to start from the known to unknown. Teach them first about the economy and then economics. Teaching about the economy itself involves some amount of abstraction and some amount of generalization. Let us start with this low level of theorizing, descriptive analysis.

When it comes to under-graduate level, we have over the country two levels—pass course and honours course. In pass course, again four courses are generally offered covering economic principles and Indian economy. They should know about growth of the state economy as also of the national economy. There should be imparted knowledge of sectoral composition of SDP/GDP but also more importantly why should they expect a change. Which means one ought to have a little idea of these indices how they are formed. There should be imparted knowledge of our labour-employment-unemployment situation as also of poverty, inequality and dimensions covered by human development. Even public-private and rural-urban divisions of many aspects would be a good idea. Emphasis on flow of resources through financial institutions across regions would be a good idea. There should be adequate emphasis on public finance. Indian economics should have a good mixture of state economy and the national economy. In short, the content of Hicks' *Social Framework*, a mis-named book, should be adapted suitably though many scholars are not happy with its available adaptation carried out by Moni Mukherji and Shyamal Ghose. This part is more analytical than institutional though some would see the institutional bias in the treatment. Since we cannot completely wish away what is there nor completely cut off from the rest of the world particularly when the dominant trends are for some kind of uniformity in methods.

For pass course while neoclassical economics with examples of real market situations have to be taught, a minimum modicum about multi-market interaction so that they could realize the repercussions of developments in one market on the other. In honours courses, depending upon the inclination of the students and teachers, the scientism brought about by imposing symmetry on behaviour of capitalists and labour as consumers and producers, likening all activities to exchange, and treating individuals—shorn of their societal existence—as hedonic locations may be exposed. For example, while production is not easily reversible, exchange is; while production is transformation through time brought about by technology and/or biology, exchange is of properties created by social organisation. So treating the two activities as the same through common denominator of utility does a lot of violence to science dealing with societal relations in material world. The restrictive definitions of work and work force, in view of the fact that a major time is spent on economic activities inside the house, need to be explained along with its ramifications for other aggregates. Whether here or in still higher level, the basic postulates undisclosed but underlying the general equilibrium analysis need to be discussed. The condition of survival is still unfiltered to the textbooks. The discussion on price-taking or the phenomenon of adjustment is lukewarmly treated.

For honours course, mathematics would be needed for drilling in analytical methods but emphasis should lie on economics and if possible the problems that they are currently faced with. It is important to discuss as to also how different statistics are compiled and indices of performance are computed. Sources and methods with logic behind them and possibly some history about the indices should be part of the syllabus. There may be or may not be recognized scope for specialization in any particular field. But infrastructure, energy, environment and issues concerning gender could be thought of for inclusion.

Microeconomics with some application and simple macroeconomics along with strong dose of public finance and role of financial institutions could form an important part. Indian textbooks on macroeconomics are hardly familiarizing macroeconomics with Indian dose and textbooks on Indian economics have rarely used analytical macroeconomic framework. Importance of home market vis-à-vis foreign market as well as empirical strengths of various flows across the national economy could form a solid base. Varieties of accounts of public finance and international balance of payments could be taught. The style could be borrowed from Hicks' *Social Framework*. One could think of including in this a course on economic development. Received development economics could well be enriched with constant flow of literature uncovering and theorizing several practices in different spheres of living and working.

Ideally, at post-graduate stage, a real advanced knowledge as well as craft of doing economics should form part of the teaching. Many college- and university-departments will not be able to undertake it. Yet an effort in the right direction should be made with the hope that it will percolate down. About a dozen centers in the country are doing quite well. May be, they need strengthen certain courses say on Indian economics where they may be slightly weak. Again, recent literature and vintage literature on problems of the Indian economy, perhaps avoiding many of rut of the textbooks pouring numbers, could form a part here. Analytical description, neither narrative nor simplified equation-system, would do a great job.

General equilibrium rather than partial, disequilibrium economics, multiproduct firms and economies of scope, apportioning of overhead costs, mechanisms of transfer pricing, various ways of state intervention in the market and cross-border flows could all be part of postgraduate syllabus. Here all underpinnings and their implications for application need to be bared rather strongly. Natural resource accounting, issues of imputing values to non-market outputs, vexed issue of gender economics should also be included as also open-economy models. Issues of and inter-relations between poverty, inequality, dimensions of human development and elements of welfare economics should be built into the syllabus. Here is also scope for introducing development of economics.

New institutional economics dealing with principal-agent problem, importance of information, existence of enforcement agencies, long-term contracts and choice between long-term and short-term contracts deserved to be discussed. Here is scope for sharing the experience of the mature students in their own market transactions. In fact the interface



that is emerging between technology and institutions, in old Marxian terms production forces and production relations, should be our interest. In fact, teaching of evolution of economy complex, if possible in a particular setting as against general setting, could be a good idea.

It is needless to say that elementary econometrics, if not taught, earlier with practical application should be an important component.

All major sectors, neither so much in terms of numbers nor so much in terms of alternative theoretical conceptions, should be part of the syllabus. These old specialization should be a part of compulsory teaching though the matter should staggered through different levels, while from the angle of employability, topics of current interest to business, environment, gender and law could form part of specialization.

Finally, a good exposure to sources of official statistics, rudimentary/thorough knowledge about their construction and possible uses in understanding various branches of economics will go a long way. But here it would be pertinent to make the student feel, question and discover that the methodology of economics is trying to capture a 'whole' as an 'aggregate' and therefore there are limitations in use of many indices we are employing.

I have divided the content in a certain graduated manner but actual division and flexibility is a matter of field. The actual division will entirely depend on the level and background of students, interest, competence and inclination of faculty, academic environment of the institutions, opportunities of application of knowledge and skills. Taking note of several other factors such as availability of other subjects, choice between vocational and academic stream and guidelines from the UGC/Board each body will take its own decision. Though everything emerging needs our attention as teachers, we need not necessarily pass on everything to the students as there may be a lot of irrelevant material. Still further, we should leave some scope for experimentation rather than blinding them with blinkers.

### ***FACULTY***

All this suggests that there is availability of good teaching faculty, which is not true. New generation is expected to be better equipped and doing better than the old. They are our carry-forwards. Many of the oldies like me believe that the new generation of teachers is ill-literate and insincere. This is result of our own maladjustment. Our belief in them rather than cynicism about them will embolden them to do better. If we give them time for self-development, encourage them to participate in conferences and seminars and suggest them for a variety of refresher courses for enrichment (rather than promotion), it will be possible to have good faculty for new courses. What do we do? Mature economists should write simple books for schools and undergraduate without using cut-paste technology!

Teachers must engage in some research, which may be some kind of survey of literature. They may at least go through some of the entries in *The Palgrave*, try to gather literature as much as possible and conclude on their own rather than quoting somebody in the beginning and somebody in the end. Refutation rather than confirming or conforming is the best strategy to learn. Some teachers should soil their hands with collection of data on their own to see if there is some resemblance between what is happening on ground and what is being taught. It is possible that all four theories in a particular area get confirmed in the first blush and this should cause no worry. Still others can play with secondary data on computer.

I have kept a certain audience in mind while making these comments. I think M.V. Mathur was echoing the same when he said that we must begin with the teaching of teachers of economics (Neelakantan, 1989). They should develop a habit of ever-willing to learn and ever-willing to question. In some places we find that some of us house both ignorance and arrogance and thereby hamper growth of new generation of teachers. Moreover, the new generation should be encouraged to opt for newer branches but continue developing wider perspective.

### **PEDAGOGY**

Depending upon the matter, there are used a variety of styles in teaching. For yoga or shooting, we use one style and for a philosophical discourse, another. In certain cases element of training plays a more important role; while in others, dialogue is more effective. Certain aids are suitable in certain modes of teaching. The issue is that learning must take place and the learning must mean use of knowledge in furtherance of something good to the society in the final sense.

In teaching economics and most of social science and arts, simple lecture method has been the dominant mode. We usually involve chalk and talk method in our classes, which are quite often monologues. Students are rarely supposed to understand. They are supposed to learn by heart for examination. Now there is scope for using variety of other teaching aids and making learning more effective, beyond examination.

All teaching aids have certain advantages but have their limitations. Audio-visual aids, which are considered to be great advantage, have their limitations too. For example, since a set of transparencies are ready and therefore *do not prepare for lecture and must finish all transparencies* attitude is a great handicap. Yet, for repetitive kind of diagrams, power point presentation or over laying one transparency over the other will save a lot of time and will not break the continuity.

It may be found to be economical from institutional point of view to go for e-teaching/e-learning, e-conferencing and so on. Virtual teaching, as it is called, is devoid of human touch and cannot have the same impact as a human teacher does. For training some of these tools may be good but where you wish to finally advance the frontiers and wish to come out with new ideas and new solutions, either it is a dialogue or self-learning.



Yet, not using technology where one can is not a good idea. So creative use is the answer.

However, I would like to emphasize is that panel discussions and symposia could be organized with local resources and mutual cooperation between different departments like Economics, Commerce, Management, Insurance, Banking, Agricultural Economics, Business Economics, Statistics, Demography, Law and so on.

Finally, the teacher and the institution should realize and impress upon the students that examination is not the end of learning but only a step in it. It has to be told time and again that the real purpose of learning is to be able to use the knowledge and skills learnt in the service of society and to earn wherewithal therefrom.

### **PRACTICALS**

Let me emphasize that Economics is a social subject but a science too though intermediately hard. Each department should aspire for a laboratory, which is fairly easy now. A patient training of students with real life Indian data collected from pocketbooks/handbooks shall help them learn the tools by doing and comprehend the intricacies of the economy. They will improve their research skills and research quality as well. They will be much more confident as they will develop a feeling of creation. We shall thereby be able to produce at least technicians and technologists—if not scientists and ideologues. They will be greatly demanded in today's world.

With a view to improving quality of teaching, some scholars addressed to the question of preparation of teaching material in general and textbooks in particular—which unfortunately they never had time to write. Occasionally, question about medium of instruction was also raised. And, very rarely, economists devoted their time on the issue of how to teach economics, which was left to the teachers of teachers' training institutes. Which means the students were never in focus! Second, the discussion was about always economics education at university and college level though economics is taught and rightly at below college level also.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

When great scholars like Sukhamoy Chakravarty thought use of foreign books by teachers is one of the reasons for fragmentary teaching, they did not take notice of the books written in Indian languages, nor of those circulating in thousands of colleges in non-metro centers. Actually, there are a good number of textbooks available, which may not be rated as very good or even good. What do I think of the textbooks in circulation countrywide in English and in Indian languages as 90 percent teaching in undergraduate courses in about 5000 colleges and 80 percent teaching in postgraduate courses in about 1000 colleges and perhaps 50000 schools take place in the mother tongue? I agree that the books are substandard and I agree that many of them are ill-written and I also agree that the material contained therein is inappropriate but I do not agree that they have done

no service. On the contrary, I think, in the absence of good, appropriate and well-written books, they have done a great service. This could be a universal fact, not peculiar to Indians.

In India, those who should have written textbooks by these normative standards have not written them, and those who ought not to write, have actually done so. While the former have done disservice by not writing, the latter have actually done service by writing. The former did not risk their time and resources. The latter had no better options. Both the groups made their economic calculations. The former made name and fame and money and toured the world, the latter met the demand for textbooks and made money. It does not mean that all textbooks are bad. Even the bad ones did some service to let students learn some economics even for passing examination. People point out Gresham's law in this regard but so long bad money is serving as medium of exchange it is doing its job.

But Chakravarty was right in the sense that foreign books are inappropriate for teaching in India. But why are they inappropriate? For our setting is different. So teaching material has to be written. Not only Textbooks have to be written, but also Monographs, Readers, Workbooks, and Handbooks for teachers. Let us imagine that there are people with differentiated and graded capabilities. May be a team of teachers does certain things better. Expectedly, all teachers are not going to be involved and should not be involved in this activity but many more than in the present can be and should be involved.

Textbooks have to be written even if they are to be e-published. Who should write a textbook? I think those who have gained sufficient maturity to make a judgement what and how much should be passed on the students at what level. A researcher, who ventures out to be a textbook author, should not push down his research agenda. A teacher, who is a voracious reader, should not discuss all controversies he has known. Though social sciences are heavily value-loaded, a textbook writer should be broad-minded enough to indicate various shades of opinion. But a textbook writer should preferably write in his area(s) of specialization. Further for school children, the style could be interactive rather than narrative, interesting material could be inserted in boxes and material that could break the continuity could be put in appendices. A good glossary would further enrich the book. Exercises and activities could be included. This will suggest them that there is nothing to learn parrot-like fashion. Some of these ideas could be tried in books for undergraduate students as well.

For school students and for undergraduate students, textbooks are a must while postgraduate students should be encouraged to read economic columns in newspapers and magazines. They should learn more from notes, reading lists, readers and journals. They should be encouraged to use the inter-net, if possible. For them, teaching monographs for various topics could be prepared. Since most of the monographs may not have good market, some learned bodies should come to support such activity. These bodies may have to seek support from various sources—governments, financial institutions, philanthropists, etc.

I have deliberately not covered the part related with teaching for research.

### IN CONCLUSION

U. Sankar (1991) felt that India needs a large number of competent 'middle-brow' economists, well-trained in economic theory and quantitative techniques, with sound perception of our goals, environment and problems. Where will they work? Should all economics teaching lead to making of economists? Or we should think in terms of well-spread economics learning at various stages with 'economists' at the top. I have kept the latter in mind in proposing the conduct of teaching part.

I have tried to delineate some of the issues concerning the science of Economics, its relevance and applicability to the countries of the West as well as in those like ours. In the context of teaching, I discussed various aspects of received theory, quantification, and weaknesses of courses on Indian economics. I also tried to delineate the future course of action in terms of suggesting an outline of syllabus, improving the quality of teachers and teaching through use of variety of new ways, and providing hints for writing of textbooks and monograph. I have also suggested extensive use of computer-based laboratories to turn the students as technicians and technologists, who will be in great demand in various spheres in the days to come.

I think I was too pragmatic as a professional in delineating my ideas in teaching Economics. I think we need more technicians and technologists than scientists. The distinction I make between science and technology is that science has overtones of universalism while technology is more social, quite society-specific. I have taken a technology view of economics so that we have good supply of those who have scientific temper but can also feel the pulse of who turn up for cure or better health. If I have failed saying much for developing scientists or ideologues, I consider it success. Some other day, some other time, I think I will have occasion to say on the other side.

[Each visit I made outside Delhi during the preparation of the lecture as well as before finalization of the script for publication, I made it point to exchange notes with scholar friends in different cities. At this point of time I am able to recall the contributions of the following scholars: Prof. Rajeshwar Prasad, Prof. P.K. Mishra and Dr. Prabha Mishra, Prof. Anjali Kulkarni, Dr. V.N. Deshpande, Dr. Sneha Deshpande. At Delhi, Prof. A.K. Dasgupta and Prof. Pranab Banerji were kind enough to read the draft and make observations and Dr. V. N. Alok shared his views on some specific issues. While everybody recalled above could be credited with contribution along with the scholars I had discussion on earlier occasions as well as the authors whose works were consulted, everybody is absolved of the odd views for which I am all alone responsible.]

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9

**EDUCATION SYSTEM AND RESEARCH IN SOCIAL  
SCIENCES EXPANSION, INCLUSION AND EXCELLENCE :  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UTTAR PRADESH**

**NMP Verma & Asha Srivastava**  
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Lucknow



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# **Education System and Research in Social Sciences**

## **Expansion, Inclusion and Excellence**

### **With Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh**

N.M.P. Verma\* & Asha Srivastava†

Social Science Education and Research (SSER) holds very important place at all levels of country, state, district and individual. Millennium of developmental goals are set for education from time to time, some are achieved and some go idle. The goal differs from country to country, state to state, district to district. It very much depends on the economic, political and social conditions of that individual. In India also the education system very much differs from State to State. The developed States achieve this goal easily while the under-developed economies have to face a lot. In India, Kerala was the first state to achieve universal literacy. In Kerala there is nearly universally school enrolment, or we can say that, there is nearly null drop-out in the schools. There is no disparity in literacy and enrolment at all levels in Kerala while other BIMARU States suffer from this problem. The State capitals and other developed districts show disparity in literacy and enrolment at different levels. The Kerala's education system is an exclusive example for the whole country. Any country, state or district needs financial resources for educational developmental activity. Literacy is the key objective for any development. It affects all the aspects, social, economic as well as political. In Uttar Pradesh there is wide disparity in literacy and enrolment at all levels.

Now another issue arises that social science education and research (SSER) are not given so important place as physical science or basic sciences. In our society physical science attracts the students as well as to the government. The meritorious students are attracted towards physical sciences while the left outs have to live with social sciences. Again the government also gives more financial support to physical sciences and professional courses. The aim of the present paper is to examine and exhibit expansion, inclusion and excellence in SSER vis-à-vis other disciplines.

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## **Inclusive Higher Education**

Indians boast themselves as being belonging to the largest democracy in the world. This is true, but only theoretically. Democracy demands the participation of all of its citizens in the developmental process in all its aspects. A major chunk of the population is still illiterate, caught in the pangs of poverty, and is systematically deprived of a decent share in the resources of the country, thus, pushing India almost to the bottom of the 'Human Development Index.' In other words, there is a large gap, an unpleasant and ever widening gap between the rich and the poor. While the former has retained all privileges, the later are denied even basic human dignity. They are unequal citizens, excluded citizens. Such a state of affairs goes against the basic spirit of our Constitution, which ensures equal rights and individual dignity to all its citizens and abhors discrimination in any mode or form. Unequal opportunities and the discriminatory social exclusion are unhealthy signs of our society; they need to be addressed correctly and urgently. This has a direct bearing in the making of a united Indian nation. It is very unfortunate that even the modern institutions of higher education are not free from social discrimination. This discrimination manifests itself in under-representation of students coming from the marginalized sections of society and various forms of caste biases against the students within the institutions. Besides SC/ST students, female students too face exclusion due to social problems and the prevalence of gender-biased atmosphere within the campuses. In recent days, incidences of sexual harassment have gone up in educational institutions. More worrisome is the fact that in some of these incidents, male faculty members were involved. The situation is not very different for students belonging to the minority communities, particularly Muslims (see, Thorat, 2008).

Other dimension of this problem is lack of proper representation of students from marginalized groups, female students and students from weaker economic backgrounds. Various data sources have shown that even after various steps being taken by successive Governments, these groups have not been adequately represented in higher education. Partly it is either due to non-implementation of these steps or due to improper provision. For example, many educational institutes, especially in the private sector, try to flout reservation norms while giving admissions to the students or filling

up of vacancies for faculty positions. The amount of various scholarships in many states is meager and payment is irregular.

### **Expansion and Exclusion in Higher Education**

Compared to the educational scenario in colonial India, there is a substantial change in Independent India. Since Independence, the number of Colleges and Universities, which includes science and social sciences, has registered a significant hike from 1950-51 to 2004-05, while the number of universities has increased from 28 to 348, the numbers of Colleges have gone up from 578 to 7625. During this period, enrolment in higher education registered steep hike, from around 0.174 million to 10.48 million. The number of teachers has also gone up from around 2,400 in 1950-51 to 472,000 in 2004-05. By the year 2006, the country has had 20 Central Universities, 217 State Universities, 102 Deemed Universities, 10 Private Universities, 13 Institutions of National Importance and 5 Institutions established under the State Legislature Act.

This rapid expansion in the quantity of higher educational institutions does also indicate the satisfactory exclusion of the marginalized sections of society. Several scholarly studies have brought to light the exclusionary character of these Institutions. Though the number of candidates belonging to the categories of SC, ST and women is in an ascending order, this is far from satisfactory; given their large share in total population their representation in Higher Educational Institutions is very negligible. The educational attainment of the Muslims is dismal, compared to the other marginal social groups, particularly the SC and ST, their representation is extremely discouraging as is evidenced by the recent *Sachar Committee Report*.

Social exclusion not only generates tension, violence and disruption but also perpetuates inequality and deprivation in society. In India, certain communities such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, otherwise disabled and religious minorities experience systemic exclusion in the matter of taking advantages of development. Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional concept having social, cultural, political and economic ramifications. These dimensions are inter-woven. The relations of social exclusion can be shown in several ways. One can talk of systemic or constitutive exclusion, which is inbuilt in hierarchical social system, i.e, caste system. It excludes certain communities from interaction and access to social resources through



social arrangements, normative value systems and customs. The exclusion based on caste is one example. Such systemic exclusion is reinforced by instrumental exclusion, which is embedded in the economic structure and the macro-economic policies associated with them. Members of certain groups by virtue of not having particular marketable assets/capabilities and facilities/linkages are excluded from opportunities to add/improve their capabilities. For example, those who are asset-less (landless in the rural area) do not get adequate useful education to improve skills and enhance their capabilities. Such exclusion leads to other kinds of deprivation, which in Amartya Sen's words, "lead to the impoverishment of human life through their casual consequences (such as the denial of social and economic opportunities that would be helpful for the persons involved)." The consequences of macro-economic policies such as poverty, unemployment and involuntary migration exclude the victims from economic, cultural and political activities. Systemic exclusion reinforced by educational exclusion, supports structures of hegemony.

Institutional inequality and discrimination in higher education based on disciplines has been a pervasive feature of our society. This has prevented a large segment of the population especially those on the margin of the society from access to rights and privileges enjoyed by the dominant sections of society. Overcoming 'exclusion' constitutes the most elementary prerequisite for the building of a democratic society, the goal with which our freedom struggle was fought and the tacit social impact on the basis of which modern India has come into being. This concerns the Centre for our Constitution. Indian Constitution provides equality to all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, region and gender. It also directs the State to take various adequate measures to remove the different forms of discrimination, inequality and thereby helps to eradicate social educational exclusion. Without attaining this objective, an integrated and united nation cannot be built on a sound footing.

Several micro-level studies indicate that the situation of making social sciences as professional course is not very easy. The studies made for structuring social sciences needs more funds from Planning Commission, Finance Commission and other Central Government transfers. The research in social sciences needs more funds. The non-financial entry barriers are strengthening in professional courses. The students of government schools and rural schools find difficult to get admission to these courses.

The first generation students, whose parents are less educated and thus less aware, are not finding it easy to get admission. The children of agriculturists and self-employed parents also face the same difficulty. Again the most serious problem of society, gender also comes here. Students come for these studies are gender biased. The parents of girl students do not want to send their ward outside to study. There is huge disparity in the educational standards at the school level. This strengthens the major factor of entry barriers. In case of U.P. again the gender bias becomes very strong. In parts of Western U.P. more girl students come out for higher studies in social sciences while in Eastern U.P. less girl students come for higher studies. This shows the regional disparity and gender bias entry.

The other entry barrier is entrance test. Majority of students getting admission to professional courses have their coaching for entrance tests in cities. The students of urban areas are benefited by these coaching while the students of rural areas remain unaware of this type of coaching. The fees taken by coaching centres constitute another barrier for entrance. Students in rural areas have to incur more expenses in comparison of urban area students, because the students of rural area have to spend on transport if they come from their residence or to live in lodges. This becomes a strong entry barrier for rural and poor students. The entrance tests measures all the students rich or poor, rural or urban, boy or girl from the same yardstick for comparing students coming from different schools, different grading standards, different atmosphere and different circumstances. The government does not bother for removing the existing biases in the entrance tests. The government does not take any step in assessing the aptitude of students and in measuring their abilities. Now the existence of these entrance tests coaching institutes becomes questionable. It is harming the society and the education system as a whole. In case of U.P. the entrance tests coaching institutes have grown like mushrooms and they are snatching a huge amount from students. The students of rural areas are not benefited with these centres because they have no money to pay and no place to like and at last they are little aware.

In 1969 after recognizing the importance of social science research Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was formed by the Government of India. ICSSR was formed for development of planning and policy. ICSSR is a purely government funded national organization but it is without complete government

control. It was formed for development and promotion of social science research work. Uptill now four times the functioning and performance of ICSSR has been reviewed. The first review was done in 1973 but they did not favoured any change at that point of time. The second review was done in 1976 and the third one was done in 1986. It reviewed the council and highlighted weakness by making remedial suggestions but these were not persuaded seriously by the Council and the government.

This resulted that ICSSR was not fulfilling the expectations by disappointing the social science research. Finding no scope in research in social sciences the best of the graduates from leading institutions prefer to go to the foreign universities and stay abroad after completing their doctorate. Another part of better performing students prefer to join information and technology, NGOs and other type of financial services who offer good salaries and career prospects. They get better opportunities what they don't get in academic and research institutions. The qualities of research done by post-graduate Ph.D. students have also declined. No quality research in social sciences attracts best of the post-graduates. The competence of academicians for research in social sciences declined due to cumulative result of lowered standards for recruitment of teachers in colleges and universities. The system does not encourage and give less reward to teaching quality and research. The main cause of poor performance by ICSSR is the basic feature of its constitution, its working and availability of funds. The modus operandi (working criterion) is given in the constitution of ICSSR and Memorandum of Association (MoA). The MoA specifically makes decisions and implements them on government approval. The ICSSR is funded by Ministry of HRD but the quantum of grants is inadequate to meet the rising costs of the growing number of Institutes. There is inadequate budget allocations which leads to cash flow problems due to irregular release of funds and arbitrary cuts prevailing by the ICSSR, UGC and other research facilitating institutions. For social science researches grants are given on very rigid conditions. The institutional grants, projects and fellowship has to go through with few resources and too many conditionalities. If one satisfies any eligibility he/she is abstained on other ground due to so many conditions and thus a good research work is undone after making so many efforts. The research councils should plan and consistently pursue a coherent long term strategy. It should fix the priorities and use of different research proposals and higher studies in social sciences.

Higher studies and researches in social sciences are the basic needs of the society. Researches in social sciences are like merit goods for the society. Research in social sciences is necessary due to globalization also. Due to globalization a quality higher education and research is needed by the society. Social science research is increasingly dependent on project fund, but no adequate fund is available for fundamental researches. Funding for economics and other social sciences are not available, funds for applied data in economics are available (Ghosh, 2008).

There is a contradiction in research development based on nationalism versus globalism. In case of Uttar Pradesh the meritorious students are not able to do quality research due to the fact that the study materials are available in English only. The researches of Hindi speaking states face this problem. Due to globalization mostly the researches are done only in English. The students of Eastern U.P. and the students of Hindi speaking part of the country face the problem of less knowing English and prefer nationalism. The Hindi speaking students can express them more perfectly and accurately in Hindi only. The economic, social and political problems are the basic problems of the society and this is concerned to each and every person of the society. These researches need behaviouristic approach. Every social science research needs honesty in expression, inference and conclusion and for Hindi speaking Hindi medium students this becomes very difficult. Due to nationalization and Hindi being the national language of our country many researches are done in Hindi but due to globalization English being the main language this Hindi medium research does not get proper recognition. So, if any research is bilingual in Hindi and English both the research done in Hindi will also get global recognition and on the other side the research done in English and translated into Hindi will benefit the research scholars of Hindi medium. In Uttar Pradesh and Hindi speaking States this step will be very beneficial for research in social sciences.

### **Economic Factors**

The economically sound states in India show the exclusionary trend in improvement of quality of education at all the levels specially at school level. The intake capacity of professionally qualified professionals and institutions are in better demand. The better quality of schools and professional education are growing. The best

example is Kerala. It has controlled birth rate from 1970 to a remarkable extent. This resulted in decline in the number of children. This factor reduced the household size. A social awareness came. Kerala became the first state to achieve universal literacy. There is a nearly universal school enrolment breaking all the myths. In Uttar Pradesh and other under-developed BIMARU states this type of awareness lacked which resulted in low literacy rate. A large number of households and those not capable of paying for education, they have to depend on government and other welfare institutions, NGOs for providing education to their children. There was no remarkable growth in per capita state domestic product (SDP). For economic development of household there should be expansion in job market both within the country and abroad. Same income for big household is less while it is sufficient for small household. The income expenses is divided into all members of the household, effecting their economic and social conditions (Ajith Kumar and George, 2009).

### **Market Movements and SSER**

From the very beginning social science was treated inferior to physical science. One of the reasons behind this was that physical science can be proved and eye-witnessed while the social science was to be felt. As the time changed the trends also changed. Earlier the elite classes of the society were opted for physical sciences and the latter was left to lower class with few mobility, few resources, few access and so on. In the past the political parties paid vital role in expanding educational opportunities. The top most priority in their agenda was to expand educational opportunities irrespective of their caste and class, region, religion and income. States provided fund for education directly or through very liberal grants-in-aid. Till now, the need to subsidize educational opportunities was the main contested issue among all the political parties. Today the priorities of the political parties have changed and they do not make any clear strategy. The main cause is the emergence of privatization in the society. Due to privatization there is wide range of option within the country and abroad. Marketisation opportunities are effecting society and thus to the political and social situations. The religious groups and community organizations also create the demand and supply of educational opportunities. Some private agencies also enter in this field for providing education in backward regions, castes, gender and economic conditions. Some

institutions are formed to educate a particular caste, some are formed to education particularly girl students and so on depending on the requirement and need of the residents. The resources needed to start these schools and colleges are mobilized from within the country. The educated persons of different communities due to their social, economic and political problems combine together to make a new influential middle class. The people in this class are of different communities yet they manage to come on the front and at the leadership position on social, political and economic grounds in the state. Due to commercialization of education and social and economic mobility this middle class moves from one place to another according to suitability. After spending a lot on education this middle class wants to earn his own. Yet, though they have talent they do not opt to go for researches in social sciences because they are paid very less and this does not suit them. Students from poor economic background do not enter in teaching profession also due to increase in corruption and the nepotism in the procedure of appointment of teachers in educational institutions. The students of middle class and lower class do not go for researches in social sciences because they do not get the desired salaries, hence it becomes very tough to restrict them. Though they have talent, they can do a lot for the society yet they don't prefer to enter in this field. This excludes the real talent to enter in research.

Higher Education and Researches in Social Sciences have become *trishanku* and is hanging without giving any fruitful result. The main cause of this stage of social science is globalization and privatization. Due to globalization the national and international studies have come closer and accelerated and the exchange of views and awareness. Most of the countries of the world have been more closely integrated with one another. The process of integration among different countries is the result of declining transport costs and the advent of information and communication technologies. Globalization had made closer the economies of the country and had significant impact on the economies of both developed and developing countries. The developing countries are now aware to the process of development of developed countries and following their path according to their suitability. Globalization has significant impact on social science researches and thus it has made a quality social science research compulsory.

Many social science research undertaken by using the traditional theoretical framework have not arrived on significant results. The empirical findings do not match the theoretical conjecture; hence the researcher remains unsatisfied with his research. This is due to impact of globalisation and privatization of social science research. Again this raised a question mark to the social science research and boosts for new era research in this field. It is true that one concept in social science will be applicable in all circumstances and all time.

The physical science proves a happening while the social sciences help in identifying the evils emerging in society with time and offering solution as well. So the government needs to increase funding for the social science and create a new balanced infrastructure for social sciences. The social science illuminates human consciousness and acts as a tool for social change. However, it is becoming difficult to promote social sciences and preserve it. The main cause of this happening is limited fund. For higher studies in social sciences appropriate amount of fund is needed. For researches and other developmental works to pursue there should be appropriate funds from governmental sector and other sources of revenue.

### **SSER in U.P.**

Uttar Pradesh being the biggest State (population-wise) of India holds very important place in affecting the education system. The literacy rate of U.P. directly affects that of India.

In Uttar Pradesh the total literacy rate during 1991 was 41.60 per cent while the male literacy rate during this period was 55.73 per cent. While in 2001 the total literacy rate in Uttar Pradesh was 57.58 per cent while male literacy rate was 68.82 per cent. The women literacy rate in Uttar Pradesh during 1991 was 25.31 per cent while it was 42.22 per cent during 2001. The difference rate between women – men literacy was 30.42 during 1991 while it was 26.60 during 2001. From these figures it is evident that the difference between women and men's literacy rate has reduced. The gap between women – men literacy rate has narrowed. These figures also focus that the total literacy rate in 1991 and the total literacy rate during 2001 shows a remarkable gap of almost 16 per cent. This shows a good sign of development. To analyze it more significantly,



literate rate in different parts of Uttar Pradesh we divide the state into four parts, viz., Western U.P., Central U.P., Bundelkhand and Eastern U.P.

**Table 1: Trends of Literacy Rate in Uttar Pradesh**

(in per cent)

Literacy Rate	Male Literacy Rate		Female Literacy Rate		Total Literacy Rate	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
Uttar Pradesh						
Western U.P.	54.77	68.44	26.57	43.96	42.02	57.36
Central U.P.	54.55	68.06	28.33	45.52	42.61	57.58
Bundelkhand	57.56	73.13	23.93	43.11	42.32	59.30
Eastern U.P.	54.77	68.60	20.92	39.13	38.55	54.27
U.P. (Total)	55.73	68.82	25.31	42.22	41.60	56.27

Source: District-wise Indicator Index, 2007, Economic and Statistics Department, State Planning Institute, U.P.

The percentage of total literacy rate of U.P. is the least in comparison to other parts of the U.P. and U.P. as a whole. Again the percentage of female literacy rate of Eastern U.P. is very low in comparison to other parts of U.P. and U.P. as a whole. This indicates that more attention should be paid to Eastern U.P.

**Table 2: Trends (Gender-wise) of Literacy Rate in Uttar Pradesh**

(in per cent)

Category	1991			2001		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Total	41.6	36.7	61.0	56.3	52.5	69.8
Male	55.7	52.1	70.0	68.8	66.6	76.8
Female	25.3	19.1	50.4	42.2	36.9	61.9
Gap	30.4	33.0	19.6	26.6	29.7	15.0

Source: Different Census of India.

The above table shows that the percentage of male – female literacy rate is wider in rural areas than that of in urban areas. During 1991 the gap is 19.6 per cent in urban area while it is 33.0 per cent in rural areas. Again in 2001 the percentage literacy gap between male and female is 15.0 per cent in urban areas while it is 29.7 per cent in rural areas.

Another big question arises as the determinants of literacy is availability of schools for per lakh population. In 2001 the population (per lakh) Junior Basic School ratio was 54 while this ratio was 74 in 2006-07. Again the Senior Basic School and population (per lakh) ratio was 12 in 2001 and 24 in 2006-07.

Table 3: Availability of Schools

Schools Available for per lakh population	Junior Basic Schools		Senior Basic Schools		Higher Secondary Schools	
	2000-01	2006-07	2000-01	2006-07	2000-01	2006-07
Uttar Pradesh						
Western U.P.	79	75	12	24	6	9
Central U.P.	71	68	13	22	5	8
Bundelkhand	73	104	20	39	5	7
Eastern U.P.	49	68	11	22	5	8
U.P. (Total)	54	74	12	24	5	8

Source: District-wise Indicator Index, 2007, *Economic and Statistics Department, State Planning Institute, U.P.*

The above table clearly shows that the Senior Basic Schools have doubled in six years and the Junior Basic Schools also show increase. In U.P. the education system is increasing but there is disparity. The schools available in Western U.P., Central U.P. and Bundelkhand is much more than the schools available in Eastern U.P. This shows that Eastern U.P. needs more schools, more funds for institutions to become literate. The Bundelkhand region of U.P. has more Junior Basic Schools and Senior Basic Schools than that of the average U.P. has.

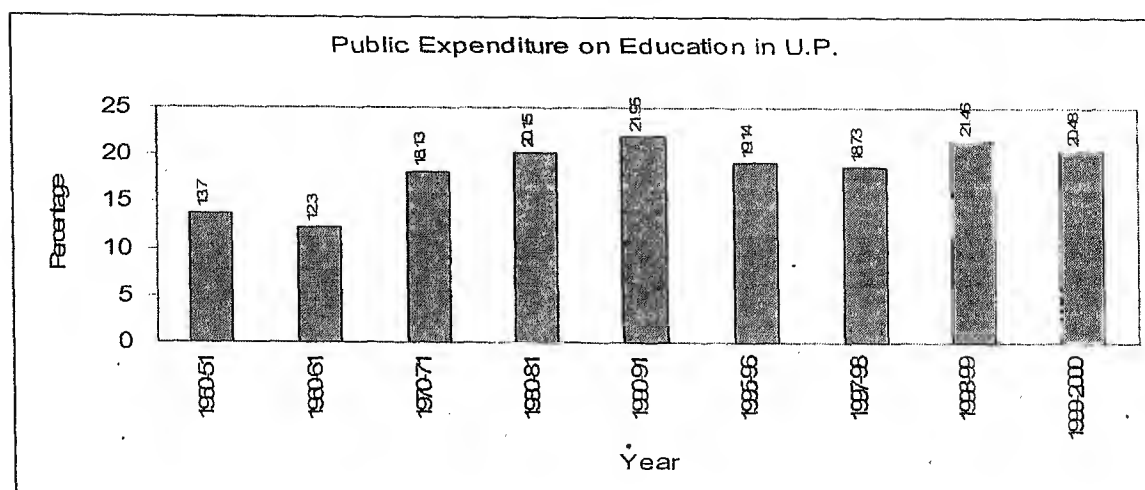
### Trends in Public Expenditure

For a developing state increasing in public expenditure is a must. As the size of population is increasing the share of public expenditure on education should also increase. The percentage expenditure on education will increase the social awareness of the society which in return will control the population size. In case of Uttar Pradesh and other BIMARU states this does not sounds true.

Table 4: Public Expenditure on Education in U.P.

Year	Primary Education	Secondary Education	Academic School	(Rs. In Crore)	
				Total expenditure on Education	% Expenditure on education
1950-51	53.21	1.64	4.85	7.10	13.70
1960-61	6.02	3.56	9.58	17.75	12.30
1970-71	36.43	17.92	54.35	74.84	18.13
1980-81	171.45	109.72	281.17	345.87	20.15
1990-91	1211.68	629.33	1841.01	2093.81	21.95
1995-96	1863.00	1110.02	2973.02	3360.92	19.14
1997-98	2269.95	1375.84	3645.79	4156.85	18.73
1998-99	3318.70	1855.41	5174.11	5840.15	21.46
1999-2000	3327.91	1896.81	5224.72	6096.33	20.48

Source: Human Development Report, 2003. Uttar Pradesh.



The above table shows in fifty years total percentage increase on education has not yet doubled. In 1950-51 percentages expenditure of total budget on education was 13.70 per cent while it was 20.48 per cent in 1999-2000. From 1970-71 to 1999-2000, after a thirty years gap it percentage is revolving around 18 to 21 per cent. The percentage increase of total budget on education shows no significant change in thirty years in U.P. If we focus on population increase in U.P. is (+) 25.80 per cent and in India is (+)21.34 per cent in the last decade that is 1991-2001. The population of U.P. has increased more rapidly than the population of India.

**Table 5: Comparative Study of Population Increase of U.P. and India**

Population Year	U.P. (Lakh)	India (Lakh)	Decadal Increase Rate (%)	
			U.P.	India
1951	632	3611	(+)11.82	(+)13.31
1961	737	4392	(+)16.66	(+)21.51
1971	883	5482	(+)19.78	(+)24.80
1981	1109	6833	(+)25.49	(+)24.64
1991	1320*	8463	(+)25.55	(+)23.86
2001	1662*	10286	(+)25.80	(+)21.34

\* Excluding Uttarakhand.

Source: Human Development Report, 2003, Uttar Pradesh.

Comparing these tables we can conclude that the percentage increase in the population in U.P. is very fast as compared to the percentage increase in public expenditure on education in U.P. For SSER to grow the growing state should shift its priorities to education because of higher decadal growth of population. State should increase the share of education in its total expenditure (revenue and capital). Allocation of fund needs further rationality.

In U.P. the number of Universities or University level institution in 2000-2001 was 27, whereas the number of colleges was 1216. Thus the total number of higher education institutions was 1243. Increase in the number of colleges in U.P. during 1996-97 to 2000-01 was 189.

**Table 6: Faculty-wise Total Enrolment in U.P. During 2000-01**

Faculty \ UT	G.R.	P.G.	M.Phil	Ph.D.	D.C.	Total
Arts	585599	107106	146	2415	1947	697213
Science	140774	21648	122	1263	445	164252
Commerce	72404	13082	0	210	390	86086
Education	9517	525	27	133	39	10241
Engineering & Technology	14946	1387	0	219	1491	18043
Medicine	10058	1288	0	357	567	12270
Agriculture	13505	1909	10	290	23	15737
Veterinary Science	249	17	0	44	40	510
Law	35878	415	0	60	98	36451
Others	2187	1282	0	88	1466	5023

Source: University Development in India, UGC (Information & Statistics Bureau, New Delhi 1995-96 to 2000-01).

GR Graduation  
M.Phil Master of Philosophy  
DC Degree College

PG Post-Graduation  
Ph.D Doctor of Philosophy  
UT University Teaching Departments.

**Table 7: Faculty-wise Women Enrolment in U.P. During 2000-01**

Faculty \ UT	Women in Total					
	G.R.	P.G.	M.Phil	Ph.D.	D.C.	Total
Arts	253640 (43.3)	43308 (40.4)	59 (40.4)	978 (40.5)	369 (19.1)	298354 (42.8)
Science	36812 (26.1)	6521 (30.1)	43 (35.2)	379 (30.0)	176 (39.6)	43931 (26.7)
Commerce	12734 (17.6)	2097 (16.0)	0	27 (12.9)	131 (33.6)	14989 (17.4)
Education	3709 (39.0)	228 (43.4)	12 (44.4)	56 (42.1)	2 (5.1)	4007 (39.1)
Engineering & Technology	1780 (11.9)	135 (9.7)	0	21 (9.6)	368 (24.7)	2304 (12.8)
Medicine	3128 (31.1)	438 (34.0)	0	110 (30.8)	235 (41.4)	3911 (31.9)
Agriculture	598 (4.4)	169 (8.9)	4 (40.0)	10 (3.4)	0	781 (5.0)
Veterinary Science	5 (2.0)	15 (8.5)	0	6 (13.6)	4 (10.0)	30 (5.9)
Law	4440 (12.4)	65 (15.7)	0	4 (6.7)	4 (10.0)	30 (5.9)
Others	865 (39.6)	410 (32.0)	0	54	573 (39.1)	1902 (37.9)

Source: University Development in India, UGC (Information & Statistics Bureau, New Delhi 1995-96 to 2000-01).

GR Graduation  
M.Phil Master of Philosophy  
DC Degree College

PG Post-Graduation  
Ph.D Doctor of Philosophy  
UT University Teaching Departments.

**Table 8: Percentage of Literate Rate in Rural and Urban Areas of Uttar Pradesh**  
(in per cent)

Uttar Pradesh	Rural Literacy Rate		Urban Literacy Rate	
	1991	2001	1991	2001
Western U.P.	37.08	54.05	55.06	65.40
Central U.P.	34.91	51.49	66.41	74.53
Bundelkhand	36.41	54.89	63.71	73.87
Eastern U.P.	35.16	51.55	63.76	73.54
U.P. (Total)	35.82	52.53	60.15	69.75

Source: District-wise Indicator Index, 2007, Economic and Statistics Department, State Planning Institute, U.P.

The above table indicates that percentage of urban literacy rate of Western U.P. was low in 1991 and 2001 both as compared to other parts of the state. But it also shows that the rate of growth of literacy rate in 1991 and 2001 is around 10 per cent as is in the other parts of the state. The increase in literacy rate is dependent on the physical infrastructure such as number of primary school established per one lakh population in that locality. As the number of schools increased from one decade to another, the literacy rate has also increased in most of the districts. This shows a positive relationship between number of primary schools and literacy rate. However, this linkage could not be established in the case of few districts. Though, there has been decline in the number of schools per one lakh population, still there has been increase in the literacy rate. Only eight such cases are noticed in Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, it may be argued that one to one correspondence relation between number of schools and literacy rate is not practicable. There are certain other important factors, which contribute for better literacy rate. For improvement in literacy rate the social, economic and political infrastructure of the society has to be improved.

## **XII FC and Financial Inclusion**

Different Finance Commissions make different recommendations giving different weights to different priorities of economic development. All the Finance Commissions have to balance equity, efficiency and autonomy and this task becomes more difficult in federation like India. In India there are political pulls and pressures for fiscal devolutions. For resource transfers in federation, a noted Federal economist Robin Boadway has rightly commented, "the role and design of inter-governmental transfers

is as much as much an art as a science.” The exact fiscal requirements of the States are assessed by the Finance Commission with reference to their deficiencies in basic minimum needs. The Twelfth Finance Commission made provisions of special grants to U.P. The Twelfth Finance Commission made these recommendations keeping in view of the states declining capacity to spend on education, so that the required level of public expenditure on education did not fall below the normative level. The Twelfth Finance Commission has recommended this education grant to be given by the Central Government for the period 2005-06 to 2009-10.

**Table 9: Central Grants-in-Aid to U.P. for Education under the Twelfth Finance Commission Award**

Year	Amount of Grants (Rs. in Crore)	As per cent of Total Education Grants to all States
2005-06	736.87	43.6
2006-07	806.87	43.7
2007-08	883.52	41.4
2008-09	967.45	43.8
2009-10	1059.36	43.9
2005-10 (Total)	4454.07	43.8

Source: Report of the Twelfth Finance Commission, 2005-10, Government of India, November 2004.

The overwhelming part of public educational funding about 80 to 90 per cent goes in the form of grants-in-aid to schools, colleges and universities at primary, secondary and higher education levels. But at present they are not giving the desired result and are largely devoiding of performance incentives. A better educational result in terms of quantity and quality is required. There is no proper method to allocate grant for social sciences.

### **SSER in Eleventh Plan**

Education hold very important place for Planning Commission, Finance Commission and other Central Government transfers. The policies and implementation changes from time to time, under different Planning Commissions, Finance Commissions and Ministries. In the sphere of higher education, the change in the Eleventh Plan is very encouraging and after a long time, there seems to be light at the end of the tunnel. The knowledge commission advocated abolition of the UGC and both privatization and

globalization of a larger education base. The UPA government gave priority to health and education while in mid-term review of the Tenth Plan showed a decreasing trend. Sarve Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was started to promote elementary and primary education. The Eleventh Plan emphasize on public investment and public-private partnerships (PPPs). The higher education being a public good and its development will not harm the society anyway. This will be very beneficial and boosts the economic development. The public private partnerships in education will give the responsibility to literate the society by the society. No one be excluded by any one and PPPs will become inclusive factor for the economy. The Eleventh Plan introduced entrepreneurship training programmes for school drop-outs. This will be a right step in right direction and help self-employment (Alagh, Y.K., 2008). The plan document hardly highlights SSER.

The Eleventh Plan ensures much scholarships and loans side by side is very encouraging. This plan accepted that each state will have a central university and a good college in each district. But this responsibility lies on the intellectuals and people serving in education line, how to implement it. The best talented must be encouraged to go in rural areas and do for them. More focus and importance should be paid to female education, female security, minority education, Muslim education, etc. The percentage expenditure on education in U.P. during IXth Plan was 7.2, it was 9.5 in Xth Plan while it was 7.8 during XIth Plan (Annual Plan 2008-98, U.P.).

### **Remedial Issues**

The salary and fellowship structure are inadequate to attract and retain qualified academicians. The private firms pay high salaries and fellowship for these researches and they show a bright future also. In government sector and the institutions pay very little so they do not attract the intellectuals. The universities other than central do not pay anything for social science researches. In fact any research either in social science or physical science needs a huge amount of money as well a labour. This step lowers down the morale, motivation and capability of research. The performance of the research should be assessed and should be rewarded. The mechanisms for appraisal of requests for grants should be made easy and accessible.

The Council for Social Researches should be governed by eminent scholars from different social sciences. This will enable a good quality of research and all the social sciences will get their due place in the society. A little number of government



representatives should be involved in this process. The eminent scholars should enlighten these social searches and focus on the importance of the society. All the research works should be reviewed by the eminent scholars. Broad guidelines should be provided to the research scholars in order to obtain a quality research in that particular field.

The social science research should play a crucial role in generating more knowledge and better insights. A quality research helps policy makers public discussions, facilitates in informing public policy and thus it deepens the root of democracy. It acts as a pool between government and public. The research councils should come forward to fund and support high quality social science researches that analyses the documents and interprets different aspects economic, social and political, emerging trends. The important contemporary issues in a broader perspective should be discussed and a multiple viewpoints should come out to enlighten the policy makers as well as to the government.

The public sector plan outlay for social science research should be increased. The social science research covers all aspects of economy, society and policies the government should made a separate department for funding instead of making an individual part of it. The increased resources should be used to expand research institutes, research project, fellowships and other support services to get the best results from it. The research funding strategies should be reviewed, restructured and reoriented.

The doctoral and research fellowship for SSER should be increased and pooled in order to play an effective role for the society. Initiatives should be taken to encourage and support this social science researches within the country and abroad. Selected research institutes and universities should organize and conduct specialized research methodology courses sin social sciences.

Access to the library resources should be made easy. Each and every research scholar can access to the library where he or she wants. This will make all the resource available to the researchers and a quality work will come out. The e-library should also be made very rich and its costs should be reduced. Computer networks in collaboration with other organizations should be used to reduce the cost of research. The current Indian researches in different discipline should be reviewed. The Data Archives Unit should be reviewed and reorganized. The rich and enlightening material of regional language newspapers, magazines and periodicals should be made available. This will bring out the voice of all from all corners of the country. The theoretical work and literature review on selected useful themes into major Indian languages should be translated and made easily

accessible. These steps will reduce the cost of research in social science and a quality research will come in the society to awaken economically, socially and politically. This type of research will become a public good as well as merit good for the society.

In this context, the following measures may be considered:

- The amount of scholarships meant for students of marginalized sections for SSER should be increased substantially by taking into consideration their financial position.
- The mushrooming private institutions are highly insensitive to social cause. They do not give thrust to SSER. They should be strictly regulated and rationalised.
- The role of the State and the market may be well defined. It is being observed that higher education is tending towards commercialization. Poor persons are not finding it affordable. Since social science education is comparatively cheaper therefore more students opt social sciences more so through distance mode and private mode. This trend may be changed for better quality.
- The creamy layer of SC/SST/OBC candidates should be excluded from benefits while the poor students of general category should be included. This may reduce the requirement of funds.
- By increasing stipends, grants, scholarship, salaries and other resources, the migration of intellectuals working in social science area research should be checked.
- Facilities of social science researcher working in rural areas should be increased.
- Social science researchers should be encouraged to work and retain in this field by giving promotions and equal status and salary as physical science in private institutions.
- Social science being public good, social awareness is very necessary.
- Public should use social science knowledge as merit good.
- Social science researcher should be linked to skilled researcher.
- Social science should be professionalized and job oriented in order to bring qualitative changes through social researches.

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# **SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION : TRENDS AND ISSUES**

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## SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION: TRENDS AND ISSUES

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In the new Millennium we talk of knowledge society and supremacy of knowledge. It is well known that the countries of the world remained backward where there were lesser stock of knowledgeable people and philosophers who guided the nation its future course of development. Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle developed visions on the basis of which Greece developed and achieved glory and fame. Indian society had had a long tradition of seers, rishis and maharishis like Manu, Yajnavalkya, Vyas, Kapil, Kanad, Jaimini, Patanjali, Aryabhatt and so on who developed philosophy, science and art of life. They interpreted Vedic Knowledge into Upanishads, Brahmsutra, and Gita, the sacred books of knowledge known as 'prasthantrayee' which prescribe the path of freedom from sorrow and sufferings and lead towards eternal bliss. These sacred books delved into the areas which directed man's life and stated its purpose.

The crux of all the knowledge was to lead the society on a path of 'welfare of all'.

'Sarve bhavantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramayah,

sarve bhadraṇi paśhyantu, ma kaśchid dukh bhagbhaved'.

Let everyone be happy, let everyone be free from disease, let we see everybody in his good, and let nobody suffer from any kind of dukhah. The philosophy is inclusive of everybody in society. For the purpose of attainment of such goals of welfare, the path prescribed was that of duties, the righteous karma. The prescription of duties was stated to be the dharmah. It was spoken that it is the righteous functioning of the man, who is super most creature of this world, which bears all the development and keeps in balance the Mother Nature and the Mother Earth. "Dharmo rakshati rakshitah" Dharma bears all. All the development and the beauty of it.

There is a phase in India when the ancient knowledge was forgotten and the country receded into darkness for millenniums. The long history of foreign invasions and its slavery onto the hands of foreign invaders and the Europeans the nation became withered not only in material terms but also in terms of knowledge.

The nations which reached the pinnacles of development and cultural heights were those where the vision of their philosophers and the knowledgeable was eminent. Greek, Mesopotamian and Indian cultures attained their heights and supremacy on the basis of the visions of their philosophers. Plato developed the concept of philosopher king who had no family. Indian culture developed on the basis of 'tyagmaya bhog', "tyakten bhunjithah", that is, enjoying the material things of life with a view of sacrifice. According to swami Vivekananda the ideal of Indian society had never been a wealthy man rather it was he who relinquished worldly things for the welfare of the humanity. Where ever in history the quality of the knowledge society faded the

country receded into darkness in every respect. The direction to society must come from the intellectuals who bear great responsibility to lead the nation towards the path of development where nobody faces deprivation.

The paper is in two parts. With this brief introduction, the other part of the paper would attempt to analyse the crisis of contemporary society in India and would attempt to count down the major issues before society, in the next part it would attempt to suggest the path for present and future researchers and research institutions and the universities to effectively cope with the problems of the day and alleviate the dichotomy in development of social sciences and the technical sciences through making social sciences progressive and updated with the changing societal perceptions as a result of technological revolution.

## **PART-1**

The period since the Industrial Revolution is a dividing line in the world history which brought about revolutionary changes not only in the means of production and distribution but also was fundamental in changing the shape of the society. The revolution was based on scientific temper of the modern era and advances in the field of energy use (power of steam), chemistry and mining (iron). Authors like L C A Knowles identified that the Industrial Revolution was based on two items coal and iron; the first provided motive power and the iron produced machines. Machines backed by motive power brought the revolution, which was so fundamental that it changed the whole shape of not only production and distribution it also was crucial in bringing about social and cultural revolutions. The whole thought process was changed in the times to come. As a result of the revolution in the mode of production and incoming of Factory System income levels and living standards in European countries went up sizably. The society which was up till now basically agricultural and inert was now geared for dynamic changes in favour of industrial development. The society was divided into two classes, the entrepreneur class and the labour class. The structure of society was fast changing with the advance of the newer changes in the scientific and technological sectors.

Renaissance in the field of literature and culture was coming alongside when old values and practices were challenged, tested and restated based on newly acquired knowledge and the progress made in various fields. Sartre in Germany challenged the concept of some super power in the heaven named God, who is controlling all worldly affairs being himself invisible to the eyes and said either he is nonexistent or he has grown too old to take care of the humanity and the world or he has died. Karl Marx opined that religion is like opium and the God is a creation of man's mind. He is a concept only. He also challenged the capitalist philosophy of the Classical's and asked for state control of resources in place of private ownership and private property right to eliminate exploitation. He called upon "workers of the world to unite" and seize power from the Capitalist Bourgeoisie class forcefully.

In poetry and literature it was the period of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton, Byron, Shelly and Keats and others who were advancing the society on yet another plane of sophistication, aesthetics and the higher and subtle things of life and decidedly not on the rough materialistic



plane of economics and commerce. The humanity, in sum, was advancing fast towards newer heights in all the field of science, technology, other life sciences and literature.

In the latter half of the Twentieth Century the advances in electrical sciences, electronics and communications and in computer sciences, and in air transportation showed exponential growth and took things to the world of imaginations and fictions which were still unheard of and were limited to science fictions and other figments of minds in poetry. Man landed on the surface of Moon and the poets imaginations of thousands years of the Moon in the form of beauty incarnate turned out into rock stones without traces of life. Now Indian scientists have discovered traces of water on it.

### CRISIS OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The crisis of the contemporary society is owing to the dichotomy of development. Whereas advances in physical sciences had been unprecedented in the last two hundred years or so, the advance in social sciences had not kept pace with it. This led to the imbalance in the growth and development of the day. The Vedic literature has called upon man to maintain a balance between "Vidya" and "Avidya", that is, the Higher Knowledge and the Scientific Knowledge. Otherwise society is bound to face doom.

Economic systems in the past have created imbalances in the society. In other words, where as few of the society reaped the advantages of the progress disproportionately high the rest of the society was still languishing in bullock cart age. The problem today in the Less Developed Countries is that of poor development as a result of which a larger part of the population is poor and vulnerable. The situation in the developed countries too is fraught with failures to cope with pollution, poverty, unemployment, mental depression, human rights violations and international terrorism. So where as technological advance enabled higher living standards it also provided tools for mass destruction. The devastation of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and death of millions of people in the two World Wars in a single century is a witness to it. The Nuclear war threat as a result of religious fundamentalism is much more eminent today than ever before.

The core lies somewhere in lopsided growth of knowledge; in between technological knowledge and social sciences knowledge; in between vidya and avidya or 'para vidya and 'apara vidya' as Upanishads state. Technology provides tools to be handled by man and man is guided by the ideology he subscribes. Therefore, the use lies in the minds of the people and how they are trained to behave and function. Obviously the role of social sciences like philosophy, sociology, economics and politics has a major role in creating balance or equilibrium between science and society. The major problem of the world these days is that of Environmental Sustainability of growth. It has been established that excess of industrial development in the developed countries has created problems of environmental pollution at such a large scale that **ozone layer** has depleted and earth's umbrella to safeguard it from ultra violet rays from the Sun has developed holes and global warming and climatic change is the outcome of that. Besides, land, water and air and the whole environment has become so polluted that man's survival itself is threatened.

Economists have started talking of 'limits to growth' and in terms of not only stabilizing current population but diminishing it to sustain growth in the future.

Besides rampant poverty and illiteracy in the poor economies have started consolidating unrest of society and expressing it in the name of religion in the form of terrorist attacks on a large scale. It is a covert war not the direct ones which the countries of the world fought in the preceding centuries. The whole complexion of war has taken a new shape in the last few decades and has come in the form of international terrorism. The seats of terrorism are the countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran or Iraq and so on where the literacy rate is very low and society has not advanced owing to poor development of social sciences which creates vision.

Yet another dimension of the problem, or the root of many current problems, is the population problem. The population of the world escalated from around 906 million in year 1800 to 1608 million in 1900. It crossed 2 billion marks in 1930 and presently it is above six billion.

Thomas Robert Malthus was alarmed in the year 1798 when he published 'The Essay' and propounded the theory based on the biological nature of man's multiplication and niggardliness of nature in producing food for him and declared doom for man if he does not restrict his numbers. The figures are astounding when in two hundred years the numbers multiplied so fast despite deaths in the World Wars. This could have become possible for two reasons. One was the awareness regarding sewage water disposal and water filtration due to which many of the deadly diseases and epidemics were controlled. The other one was the advance made in medical science and coming up of vaccines which controlled the death rate. As an outcome of the two death rate declined substantially in European and other countries since the emergence of modern era.

India had had a population size of 100 million for thousands of years as per the United Nations reports. At the time of Independence in 1947 the population size is estimated around 330 million. The people were overwhelmingly poor and economy was poverty ridden at the time of Mahatma Gandhi and Javahar Lal Nehru then. A United Nations report states that the average per capita income in India in 1931-32 was Rs. 65 or roughly \$ 23.40 per year in terms of American dollar. Today the total size of population of India is above 1.2 billion or 120 crores, meaning thereby that around three more India is added to its size in 1947. The problems multiplied many fold so much so that even three to four Gandhis and Nehrus would have find it difficult to cope with them had they been alive today. The era was endowed with several visionary leaders who fought the freedom struggle. We may think of the quality of leadership of today and compare the situations and bring out our conclusions. In the face of lack of visionary leadership the problems have multiplied and many of them have become insolvable. Obviously **our Universities and Management institutions are lacking somewhere when they are not producing quality leaders, administrators and managers who could handle the situation efficiently and properly.** This is the evidence of failure of or backwardness of Social Sciences and institutions who have not come up to cope with the gigantic problems created by fast development of technology and physical sciences and population and consequent changing societal complexity. In politics we have not thought beyond Democracy and have overlooked its evils and its degeneration particularly when its growth is blighted by corrupt practices and voter's neutrality

in casting vote. How far democracy could succeed in a country where there is mass illiteracy and poverty? And those who belong to elite class are least bothered to use their franchise taking that either of the candidate is equally bad.

In Indian situation, the progress and the crisis in society have to be judged in their right perspective. Whereas the economic growth rate of Indian economy moved ahead of 3 per cent Hindu rate prevailing for 3 decades and reached 7-8-9 per cent in the post liberalization period, the farmer's suicides in a sizeable number presents a question mark. As per the official reports even after 60 years of development 1,82,936 farmers have committed suicide in between 1997 and 2007. It is awful picture of development.

The unrest in society is due to the dichotomy of development which created the poor and the rich.

**Further research in Social Sciences institutions is needed on the following issues so that equilibrium is maintained among systems of science, technology, philosophy, politics, economics and sociology.**

#### **THE ISSUES:**

1. How to resolve the issues of morality and ethics in public life and materialistic approach (of profit maximization) of market and Capitalism?
2. How to resolve the dichotomy of current realities and the ideals, that is, the sale of offices beginning from the post of a clerk to a teacher to a Vice Chancellor particularly since 1970s? This has a direct bearing on the quality of the institution and more directly education and research.
3. How to promote researches in the areas of public responsibility so that unfair practices in production (adulteration) and trade are minimized if not altogether eliminated.
4. How to choose right ideology for India in view of failures of Capitalism, Communism, and Socialism, which could direct the path of future development of Indian society and economy on the basis of our rich cultural heritage and inheritance of knowledge?
5. How to bring transparency and accountability in public life so that systemic corruption and malpractices are eliminated from the politico-economic spheres?
6. How to determine responsibilities of Educational institutions and Universities and cleanse them from malpractices in granting affiliations?
7. How to prepare an agenda for social science research relevant to the needs of society?

The whole perspective is to create/generate **value based social and economic development** and inculcate discipline in public life. This is in view that the institution of market is mainly a Capitalist tool encouraging commercialization and is based on the motive of profit maximization for the individual entrepreneur. Market excludes the poor both from the consumer market as well as from the employment or labour market. This inherent weakness of Capitalist **market economy system does not address the social or normative issues (of morality)**. As India has entered into a phase of Globalization it has invited Market economy model of development (in place of Socialistic Pattern of Society) which is causing inequality and social tensions. Obviously this pattern of development is not sustainable and is beset with many difficulties (e.g., Naxalism and Maoism). Even in the field of education and knowledge commercialization has rampantly crept in and **in many of the cases education has slipped into the hands of businessmen and education mafias** whose basic purpose is to mint money in the name of fulfilling social and moral responsibilities. Education is increasingly becoming a venture in the hands of businessmen and industrialists. The whole perspective has become **profit based**. The openings of private and Deemed universities and colleges on a large scale have a different motivation altogether. And the civil society has to be aware of its dangerous designs and consequences. The price of education has risen alarmingly in recent times in India and it would become well nigh difficult for the poor to enter into it. The current system of education based on Public School system in the private hands is bound to create dissimilarities in society which would be unhealthy and dangerous.

## **PART-2**

### **THE CURRICULAM FOR THE FUTURE**

The need of the time is to join the sophisticated technologies like ICT, Space technology, and biotechnology with the social and agricultural sciences where ever possible so that they could get a direction and purpose in developing the society. Out 12<sup>th</sup> President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam has presented a development vision where rural sector could be developed on the basis of three connectivity- the physical connectivity, electronic connectivity and knowledge connectivity. It is a model of amalgamation of sophisticated technology and agricultural and rural development technology. It is known as PURA model of rural development. It is a fusion of higher technology with rural development strategy so that the dichotomy in Indian society could be eliminated through developing village sector where around two third of India lives. He addressed the issue of rural poverty with the help of ICT fusion and bringing up to date knowledge at the doors of the farmers through computers and internet kiosks. What is needed in agriculture is to infuse the knowledge gathered in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Space technology with the agrarian technology. If the dichotomy of the India and Bharat could somehow be bridged it would work wonders in revolutionizing the whole India, including the agricultural sector, and wipe out poverty and unemployment.

The strategy for a farm management revolution may be drafted with technical help from agricultural, rural and women universities as well as the IITs and the IIMs since much of the action will be location specific. As stated above there is a need for integrating frontier technologies like bio-technology ICT, Space and Nuclear technologies and renewable energy

technologies such as solar, wind, biogas and biomass based energy systems with traditional ecological prudence. Bio energy based on pyrolysis and gasification of biomass can be a decentralized source of energy. Bio fuels also offer scope where ever ecological and economic conditions are favourable.

Researches in new agricultural technologies like genomics and information technology together with improved agronomic management should form the corner stone of increasing agricultural productivity and profitability of small farms both in irrigated and rain fed areas as well as in problem soils and coastal areas. Recombined DNA technology has already resulted in the breeding of crop varieties possessing tolerance to salinity and droughts as well as serious biotic stresses caused by pests, pathogens and weeds.

India is on the threshold of both a biotechnology and information technology revolution. We are in a position to take their help to transform our villages and alleviate poverty and unemployment. Bio technology does not imply only GMOs. Non GMO applications are many, such as, tissue culture for multiplying elite germ, bio fertilizers, bio pesticides, and bio remediation of ground water as well as marker assisted breeding. In the case of GMOs safe and responsible use should be ensured.

There is a need to revamp training of farm and Home science graduates. A major mission of our agricultural, veterinary, and rural and women universities should be to help every scholar to become an entrepreneur. They can then organize service cooperatives, stakeholder companies, Agri-clinics, Agri-Business centers, Bio-Parks, Food Parks and other enterprises which can help to improve efficiency and economics of farming.

Home science colleges could be restructured as college of Human Sciences where both men and women learn the science and art of nutrition, agro-processing and home economics. A reorientation in mind set of farm graduates can be brought about only by innovative changes in curricula and courses. In all applied areas Business and Financial Management should be added to the disciplinary training. If the business, financial and trade aspects are integrated with disciplinary trainings, such courses will give the farm/home science graduates the self confidence essential for embarking upon a career of self-employment.



11

**CRISIS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES OF INDIA :  
NEED OF REFLEXIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY  
AT PG AND POST-PG LEVELS**

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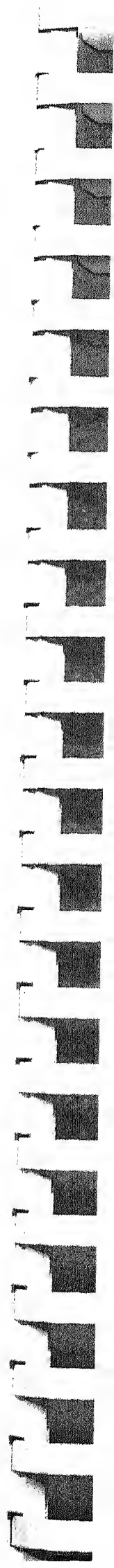
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## Crisis in Social Sciences of India: Need of Reflexive Interdisciplinary at PG and Post-PG levels

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### The Problem of Academic Crisis

As we know that knowledge has become a critical factor in determining the prospects of a society, it has assumed it's importance than ever before. Therefore, the system of higher education, which plays a significant role in the process of production and dissemination of knowledge, has also received a greater strategic importance in the policies of Government of the countries across the world. Lessons with regard to the significant contribution of Higher Education to the economic prosperity of some countries like USA, Japan, South Korea, UK and some other countries of Western Europe have been globally recognized.

The year 1991 marked India's entry into the new world economic system. Thus, in order to achieve a global super economic power and also a knowledge based society based on information technology, the Government of India has assigned greater importance to higher education. This perception of India's future is reflected in the XIth Five Year Plan proposal, in which the financial allocation to education is five fold more than in the previous Plan and almost 6 per cent of GDP. This Plan also envisages on the reduction of social disparities by ensuring health and education to all. It is highly commendable that India has developed a very large network of higher educational institutions. In the last 60 years after Independence of our Nation, the system of higher education has grown multifold numerically in terms of enrollment of students as well as size and type of institutions. The growth of colleges in the country has been spectacular as increased from 591 in 1947 to 18,064 in 2006. out of total 18,064 colleges in the country, over 95 per cent are affiliated colleges. The number of teachers in the affiliated colleges is as large as 4,09,184, where as that in the university departments and constituent colleges, is only 78,891. This affiliating system has outlived it's objectives and functions. It has become a big obstacle in the development of academic excellence at both the university and college levels (Bhoite U.B. 2009:147-151). This large number of teachers in the affiliated colleges decides the nature and function BOS, Academic Council

and other apex bodies of the state universities which greatly controls the quality of higher education in the country. Only way out is to offer the colleges their autonomous status and make them accountable to the State Department or Board of Higher Education. This will create a solid ground for competition in academic development.

It is also noteworthy that the student enrollment in higher education of India has also increased from 2,28,881 in 1949 to 1,10,28, 020 in 2006. Out of total number of students in higher education, 90.30 per cent are undergraduates and only 9.70 per cent are post graduates. Besides this numerical growth of institutions of higher education and student enrollment, a spectrum of much wider academic programs in India is also globally impressive. The system of higher education in India has now a large variety of academic programs organized in nine broad faculties. The faculty-wise students' enrollment shockingly skewed. The percentage of students enrolled in the three conventional faculties – Arts, Commerce (including Management) and Science- is as high as 83.69 (majority of the students are found in the soft and light disciplines of Arts and Social Science faculties because it is easily accessible to the poor students) where as that in other faculties are too negligible i.e Medicine-3.16; Engineering/Technology-7.21; Agriculture-0.58; Education 1.46; Law-3.05; Veterinary Sciences 0.15; and other professional subjects-0.50(As per 2005-06 figures). The overcrowding in the first three conventional faculties without qualitative development in the education of the students has created many serious problems including that of unemployment among their graduates, post graduates and even doctorates (Bhoite U.B. 2009:147-151). In fact, the problem is more compounding among the students of Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculties. Thus, mere quantitative growth of institutions and students' enrollment alone would not lead the country to become globally recognized Super Economic Power as it was perceived by the former President of India Dr. Abdul Kalam. There is also a need of qualitative development in our India's system of higher education.

Moreover, presently, there is only one college for 11,000 students and one university for over 4.7 lakh students in the age group (17-23) which means that only 6.9 % of the eligible age group only one is getting the benefits of higher education in India (UNESCO World Education Report 2000). But in Thailand, it 19% and 41% in Argentina. Thus, it is also essential to expand our higher education upto more than 20% of those eligible to receive graduation and post graduation in our country(Ahmed Samsuddin 2005:13).

In fact, India's general enrolment rate (GER) in higher education is not adequate to meet its requirement of trained manpower for achieving the global status it is aspiring for. India would require a huge number of graduates and post graduates equipped with continuously updated advanced knowledge and skills. It is to be seriously taken into consideration that mere growth of higher educational institutions i.e colleges and universities is not enough to achieve the national goal. Further, the growth in GER is not entirely dependent upon the extent of educational opportunities available to the students. There are a large number of colleges in the country which have not been well equipped with sufficient infrastructure. Even the quality of available infrastructure including the staff is not up to the mark. Local politics of administration and management is one of the strongest threats to the maintenance of quality especially in the context of admission of students, appointment of teachers and introducing advanced curriculum. With regard to these, there is no common national or central standardized format which is compulsorily applicable to all Indian institutions of higher education.

In view of privatization of higher education, the real issue is how far higher education is cost-wise or in other ways affordable to the students of marginalized communities. There are glaring disparities in GERs among the backward communities and categories i.e the SCs, STs, OBCs, Muslims, women and rural students which need to be corrected for achieving the nation objective of inclusive growth and egalitarianism. The wide disparities in GERs are also more visible in different disciplines. Most of the poor students, having lower "achievement orientations" and belonging to the backward communities and categories, are found in the soft disciplines of Arts, Humanities and Social Science Faculties. Their presence in the Science and Professional Degree courses is too meager. In fact, the issue of equity and quality in education is intimately linked with the prevailing socio-economic inequalities in Indian society(Bhoite U.B. 2009:147-151).

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is marked by a knowledge driven society which treats quality as its defining element. The "quality" may be defined in terms of excellence, perfection, standards and value for money, competencies for work, consistency and relevance. The Chinese philosopher Confucious stated that the goal of education was to produce men of quality who combined competence with virtue. Thus, "quality" is multidimensional. Through higher education, it strives to develop human resources of global standards. Thus, quality defines the goals and purposes of education. It

impacts the content of higher education, its processes, its output or product, as it seeks to develop human resources required skills excellent in performance and capable of delivering goods as a unit of the work force. The quality of this knowledge society depends upon the quality of education it fosters. If the quality of education is not assured, the education which advocated as a solution to social problems, may itself become a problem (Khanna Pratiba 2005:4-5).

It is generally accepted that increase in numbers results in decrease in quality. The same holds true of education too, where mass education has resulted in mass unemployment and has led to mass unrest. This may hold true of our conventional system of education especially in field of social science and humanities, but recent developments in the distance education system has disproved this contention. Its real success in productivity is yet to be seen. `` However, today, there is a strong feeling that the skills of graduates (especially, in social sciences and humanities) do not match the needs and expectations of the employment sector. There are mainly five top skills as identified by the employers and required of the educated workforce which are : 1) Time Management; 2) Ability to work under pressure; 3) Accuracy and attention to detail; 4) Oral communicator skills; and 5) Efficiency in managing different tasks at the same time. The UNESCO document on "Thematic Debate" has added a few more to this list as : flexibility; Innovativeness; creativity; entrepreneurship; versatility and team work spirit. To day, these skills are the parameters by which the quality of higher education is assessed. Such education enables persons and societies or nations acquire competencies required for living meaningfully in a competitive global world (Khanna Pratiba 2005:4).

Teaching, research and extension are three basic functions of higher education especially at PG and Post-PG centers where advanced knowledge is disseminated to the new generations of students through teaching-learning process; where advanced research helps in creating new knowledge, principles, theories and guidelines. However, the quality of our graduates, post-graduates and post PG degree awardees is not up to the mark. There are many loopholes in the system of higher education in India. Research is considered as the most important and strongest aspect of higher education, but it has become the weakest aspect. The whole process of research has been stereotyped and it normally lacks creativity, reflectivity, novelty and productivity (Agarwal S.C 2005:8). Baring some bright institutes of higher education in India (including IITs, Central Universities, IIMs, Research

Centres and some State Universities), the standard of many universities in the country is lagging far behind the desired expectations.

In fact, teaching and research in higher education is just like two sides of a currency coin. Both are organically linked. Without research, the existing stock of knowledge would never grow. We will be compelled to live in ignorance. Similarly, without teaching, the new generations will not be able to acquire the knowledge and skills created by their ancestors. The balance between the two is the need of the hour (Gautam Satya P. 2005:2). Higher quality in research depends upon greater teaching and vice versa. The system of higher education in any society is deeply involved in the creation and dissemination of knowledge as well as development of skills among its students as necessary for its acquisition and utilization. In fact, there are mainly three deficiencies in the system of higher education in India viz. i) inadequacy in access; ii) uneven and inequitable opportunities of higher education across different categories and sections of India's population; and iii) low quality of higher education (Bhoite U.B. 2009:147-151). Furthermore, within the system of higher education of India, in terms of quality assurance there is a wide gap between the subjects or disciplines of Pure Science and Technology Faculties as well as professional institutions on the one side and that of Humanities and Social Sciences on the other. The former is progressing faster than the later.

The success of Indian higher education is largely dependent on the quality of teaching and research. In thinking about the quality of teaching, we find mainly three areas of concern: the faculty, the syllabus and the system of examination. The system of our higher education especially in the field of social sciences and humanities, is weak in respect of these three concerns. Old syllabi, unscientific evaluation system, saffronisation of education, malpractices in teacher's appointment, poor and irregular salaries, low level of infrastructural facilities at the UG level are some of the burning problems of the current higher educational system in India. Thousands of teachers are serving for only Rs. 500/- to 2500 per month in non-granted colleges at different parts of the country. Many of the those colleges are under the control of local leaders or rich elites. While working under the whims of local authorities, teachers are losing their motivation and enthusiasm for teaching and research as well. The existing syllabus is not updated for years. The teaching learning process is half-heartedly carried on. Neither local authorities, nor administrative machinery nor the under paid teachers rarely bother about quality of teaching and research. Students are frustrated with

poor education and being employment for years. Their interests towards regular teaching is broken day by day. Therefore, the number of drop outs has increased year after year. These drop outs are becoming the tool of some anti-social elements in our society. In order to exploit the situation of growing discontent among the youth, some private institutions with employment oriented courses lure the youth with capitation and fees(Ahmed Samsuddin 2005:13).

According to professor Shah, the veteran Indian sociologist, there are three main points which bring down the quality of higher education especially in the university system of India. 1) the democratization of the governing bodies of universities; 2) trade unionism among teachers and the administrative staff; and 3) the personnel promotion scheme. On an average, a university carries a load of more than 50 colleges besides it's post graduate teaching departments. Some universities have more than 300 affiliated colleges. According to the University Act of several universities, in the decision making bodies i.e BOS, Faculty, Academic Council, Management Council, Senate etc., the college principals and lecturers have outnumbered the university professors who are generally considered as better qualified and more competent. Unfortunately, the rule of the majority prevails here. Thus, the structure, nature, scope and functioning of higher education in those universities are decided by majority of the college teacher who really dominate over the whole university system. Any progressive change is not easily accepted by the majority which also hinders the quality in higher education. Bureaucracy, across the layer of higher education is another bane which prevents democratization of power in the sector of higher education. Further more, political intervention in the field of higher education adds to the problem (Verghese A. Marriamma 2005:18). According to Max Weber(1921/1968:liii), a classical sociologist, bureaucracy reduces every worker to a cog ....The passion for bureaucratization drives us to despair". He was cognizant of the "red tape" that often makes dealing with bureaucracies so trying and so difficult. However, his major fear was that the rationalization which dominates all aspects of bureaucratic life was a threat to individual liberty and consequently progress. In fact, this hardcore bureaucratic administration, by controlling liberty of the individual academicians, often stands on the way for achieving greater flexibility, creativity, reflexivity, novelty and productivity in respect of academic development.



Moreover, compared to the disciplines of Pure Sciences, that of Social Sciences are usually conceived by the general public as softer and slow runner in the fields of academics. It may be treated as true in terms of their productivity and relevance. But, when we look into the very subject matter of the social science disciplines which are extremely complex and subjective by nature and the research laboratory of which are too broad and diffused, it is not easy to consider them as weaker faculties. There has been a long struggle among social scientists to overcome some of their basic problems related to teaching, research and extension activities. All these three functional dimensions of higher education have a triangular inter-relationship with each other. Among these three functions, research plays a mediator's role in higher education. However, research in the faculties of social sciences and humanities is lagging far behind that in the faculties of physical and natural sciences mainly due to imbedded problems in the research methodology of the former. In fact, there has been a long struggle for developing more scientific and rigorous research methodology in the Social Sciences. Though attempts have been made to develop specific methodologies in particular disciplines of Social Sciences, but no science can develop its rigorous methodology without interdisciplinary endeavor.

#### Relevance of Interdisciplinary Research:-

In social science research, there is plenty of research on various socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental issues. Even there is no scarcity of investigation on those issues in India. The scarcity is most often found in the appropriate methodology applied by the social scientists to study the pervasive and deep rooted problems like poverty and underdevelopment. In fact, there is a crisis in social science research in the country, if one looks into its relevance. Neither the policymakers nor the researchers in India rarely take it seriously as those in Western Europe. The main fault is not with social science research per se, but it is with the concerned researchers or academicians in India. Very few researchers in Indian universities do research for the sake enriching knowledge and the subject concerned. It is a fact to be noted that any research in natural sciences or in social sciences is predominantly interdisciplinary by nature and scope. But many social science researchers in India either forget about it or pretend to avoid it in the guise of maintaining their disciplinary boundaries. Many of them do research either for their degree certificates or for financial benefits. Research in social sciences, like that in natural

sciences, is innovative and creative by nature. There is no short-cut way in it. It is as much arduous so much resource consuming.

A perfect and fine research comes out only through hard way with sufficient commitment and regorousness. If it follows appropriate methodology, no doubt it comes out with appropriate results. There is a huge pile of research methodologies in social sciences which can be broadly classified into two main types i.e., quantitative and qualitative. In fact, there is a methodological issue in sociology with arguments for and against a fundamental distinction between quantitative and qualitative studies. The debate arises from different epistemological positions. Quantitative research methodologies, generally associated with positivist epistemology, are usually regarded as referring to collection and analysis of numerical data. Whereas, qualitative methodologies, generally associated with non-positivist interpretative epistemology, tend to be used to refer to forms of data collection and analysis which rely on 'understanding' and with an emphasis on "meanings". The debate became most prominent in 1970s. Growing interests in phenomenological approaches in the 1970s led to scepticism about the relevance of the natural scientific model of research for the social sciences. Since then, the debate has been extended in almost all the social science disciplines. However, some disciplines in social sciences like Economics and Demography have been more inclined to adopt quantitative research methodologies especially statistical techniques. Recent developments in software have further strengthened the interests of social scientists toward quantification of numerical data with the help of advanced statistical techniques.

In fact, relevant data or facts in social sciences, are not always numerical that can be quantified. Most often, innumerable problems in humans society are not only multi-causal and multi-dimensional, but also deep rooted and subjective that can be explored through interdisciplinary qualitative research methodologies based on approaches like : phenomenology or hermeneutics, ethno-methodology, holistic ethnography or ethno-science, ecological psychology, cognitive anthropology or social anthropology, symbolic inter-actionism interpretivism or interpretive practices or narrative research, historical research, grounded theory, life histories, case studies, conversational analysis, biological perspectives or biographical research, clinical research, studies of artifacts, participatory action research, etc. Each, approach has different disciplinary inclination and suggests for multiple methods, tools and techniques of research in social sciences. Every approach or methodology has it's own limitations or pros and cons. In social sciences, every research is interdisciplinary in terms of

the subject matter it deals with as well as the methodology it uses. As in philosophy, both objectivity and subjectivity reinforce each other, so also in research both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies do.

Recently, practicing researchers suggest that the distinction between the two types of data i. e., quantitative and qualitative, is considerably more blurred than is suggested in the theoretical debate. It is also pointed out that different methodologies are not necessarily tied to particular epistemological positions, and that there are an increasing number of techniques of analysis that defy classifications into a simplistic dualistic typology. Therefore, it is worthwhile to suggest that social science researchers should use both types of methodologies in order to reach at truth or find appropriate solution to the concerned problems. Objective reality, in the field of human/ social life, can never be derived from mere quantification and analysis or objectification of data or information.

Qualitative research in social science, however, has considerable value in itself. What is "qualitative research" and its operational definition? John W. Creswell, in his recent book "Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design" (2007:37) has very lucidly defined it. According to Creswell, "qualitative research begins with assumptions, a world view, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and study of research problems inquiring into the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher and a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action". In this definition, Creswell lays emphasis on the process of research as flowing from philosophical assumptions, to world views and through a theoretical lens, and on to the procedures involved in studying social or human problems. Then a framework exists for the procedures – the approach to inquiry, such as grounded theory or case study research. At a more micro level, there are the procedures that are common to all forms of qualitative research. The nature of qualitative research, however, can be understood in terms of following ten characteristics.

- Natural Setting : The researchers tend to collect data in the field where participants experience the issue or problem under study. They do not bring individuals into a laboratory, nor do they typically send out

instruments for fieldworkers to complete. This up-close information gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context. In the natural setting, the researchers have face-to-face interaction overtime.

- Researcher As key Instrument: The researchers collect data or information themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants in the field. They do not use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researcher. They may use a protocol - an instrument for collecting data, but the information are actually gathered by the researcher.
- Multiple Sources of Data : The researcher, instead of relying on a single source of data they typically gather multiple forms of data through techniques of interview, observations and documents. Then, they review all the data and make sense of them, organize them into categories or themes that cut across all the sources of data.
- Inductive Data Analysis : The researcher build their patterns, categories, and themes from the "bottom-up" by organizing the data into more abstract units of information. This inductive process involves the researchers working back and forth between the themes and database until they establish a comprehensive set of themes. It may also involve collaborating interactively with the participants, so that they have a chance to shape the themes or abstractions that emerge from the process.
- Participants' Meanings : In the whole process of qualitative research, the researcher keep a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researcher bring to the research or writers from the literature.
- Value-neutrality & Field Insider's Approach : The data or information in the disciplines of Social Sciences & Humanities is collected from a vast laboratory of living human beings who are capable of providing unauthentic data or information which may misguide the whole research endeavor turning into a futile exercise. Thus, a field insider's approach is essential to check the problem of manipulation or suppression of data or information. However, the research has to maintain his or her scientific rigor and commitment as well as value-neutrality while adopting a field insider's approach in the field of research.

Value neutrality usually means observing "research ethics". That means, the researcher has to follow a right, honest and fair path at every stage of the research process. In fact, the research pursuits is on such area where the

ethical conduct of the researchers promotes shedding light on the new horizons of knowledge, discovering new ideas,, establishing generalizations, finding solutions to problems, developing new tools/ concepts, thesis et. Fruitfully ( (Hundekar and Shollapur 2005:1-3).

- Emergent Designs : For the qualitative researchers, the research process is emergent. It means that the initial plan for research cannot be strictly prescribed, and all phases of research may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data. For example, the questions in the structured interview schedule may change, the forms of data collection may shift and the individuals studied and the sites visited may be modified subsequently. The key idea behind qualitative research is learn about the problem or issue from the participants and to address the research in order to obtain that information.
- Theoretical Lens: The qualitative researchers often use a lens to view their studies, such as : the concept of culture, central to ethnography, or gendered, racial, or class differences from the theoretical, orientations. Sometimes, the study may be organized around identifying the social, political or historical context of problem under Study.
- Interpretive Inquiry: Qualitative research in social sciences is a form of inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand. The researchers' interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context and prior understandings.
- Holistic Account: The qualitative researchers attempt to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under study. It involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying many factors involved in a situation and generally sketching a larger picture that emerges from the research. The researchers are tied not by a tight cause-effect relationships among factors, but rather by identifying the complex interactions of factors in any situation.
- Interdisciplinary approaches: the qualitative research always tries to incorporate interdisciplinary approaches and methodologies into it's fold. In social science research, the disciplinary boundary must be removed in practice. It is possible only when, the teaching – learning process in the subjects or disciplines of Social Science faculty becomes reflexive and interdisciplinary by nature.

Recently, there has been constant attempts and pressure from the UGC and it's NAAC to introduce the Credit System into various Faculties of Higher Education in India. In fact, introduction of the Credit System at university

level is welcomed largely by the disciplines of the Science and Commerce Faculties in majority of the Universities. In fact, introduction of the Credit System at PG level is a key to academic accountability and progress which is the sole need of the hour. Unfortunately, only a few Social Science disciplines of some universities in India have adopted it. It raises serious questions about the nature and future of Social Science disciplines in the country.

### A Need of 50-50 Strategic PG Course for Reflexive Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research

As we all are aware of the concept "interdisciplinary teaching and research" and the knowledge of which is gained through the teaching – learning process either from the class room or from the secondary resources. When that knowledge of "interdisciplinary teaching and research" is reflected in one's practical field research, it is called as "Reflexive Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research". Though a similar notion of teaching and research is found in the Credit system or Semester system of higher education with varying degrees of emphasis, but the spirit of academic culture is missing in those systems. That spirit is lacking or missing in most of the PG Centers of Social Science disciplines in India. Thus, there is a need for developing sound ground of academic culture in those PG centers where the "Reflexive Interdisciplinary Research" can be cultivated by the students under the supervision of active and dynamic teachers.

In fact, the success of a university or an advanced research institute is based on the kind of academic culture built in itself and the quality of it's products (essentially students) and the research output. Mere research without theoretical knowledge and guidance through teaching-learning process in higher education is misleading. Both teaching and research enrich each other. It is an objective fact to be noted that the disciplines of Natural and Physical Sciences have achieved mounting significant progress in academics only due to the strategy of 50-50 (Theory Teaching – Laboratory Research). In fact, the discipline of Science as such always developed only with the laboratory research. If a similar strategy is adopted into the disciplines of Social Sciences, sufficient resources (Time and energy) of the students can be productively utilized for developing adequate scientific rigor and temperament which is lacking in the existing system of university education in India. Much time and emphasis has been attributed to



theoretical teaching in the disciplines of Social Sciences and Humanities. Equal treatment has not been given to research in these disciplines. Research has always been seen in half hearted and half-hazard manner. Neither the teacher nor the student is serious about research in the field. Every one wants to avoid it. Because, it is too tough in the field of Social Sciences. Though it seems to be easy and closer to our day to day life, but it needs one's reflexive knowledge, experiences, intuition, objectivity and scientific temperament which is achieved only through consistently hard work and sufficient commitment to the subjects concerned. Such kind orientation can be cultivated among the students of Social Sciences, if a strategy of 50-50 (Theory Teaching 50% – Field Research 25% & Seminar/Workshop Presentations 25%) is made as mandatory in PG course of Social Science disciplines in all Indian centers of higher education. It requires additional workload, hard work, devotion and commitment of the teachers as well as students. This proposal may get a solid set back and hesitation of the faculties to accept and introduce. But, it is, in the long run, beneficial for all stakeholders of higher education. Both the processes of teaching and research in Social Sciences will flourish in due course of time and on the basis of which the extension activities will be soundly built up in collaboration with stakeholders of industry, market and society at large.

The 50-50 strategy of the PG course in the disciplines of Social Sciences must be based on the following seven functional requirements or conditions.

- i) There should be only two Compulsory Papers and two Optional/Elective Papers in each Part of the PG course (Part-I & Part-II).
- ii) Each paper should contain not more than five units of interdisciplinary topics.
- iii) Each unit must contain at least five issues or topics within it.
- iv) Evaluation system must be regular and continuous assessment of students' performance in a free and fair environment. It is to be based on 50% external examination and 50% internal marking.
- v) Out of total 400 Marks in each part, 50% (200 marks) must be assigned to the Theoretical Teaching and out of the rest 200 marks, half (100 Marks) should be allocated to four seminar presentations one each in four papers respectively and the other half (100 Marks) must be assigned to an research project related to any topic of the



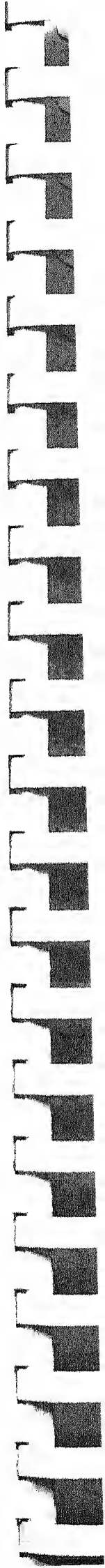
four papers. Preference is to be given to empirical research among the students.

- vi) The PG courses and syllabi need to be restructured in every five years as per the needs and demands of the market and society. While restructuring the courses and syllabi, efforts should be made to develop an optimal combination acquisition of theoretical and practical or research skills with the help of audio-visual technologies and internet networks.
- vii) Quality of higher education in the Faculty of Social Sciences can also improve by inducting quality oriented merit promotions under the Career Advancement Scheme which can be more transparent and credible if sufficient weight-age is given to sound teaching, research publications and research supervision as well as extension activities. Basic parameters of Academic Merit need to be developed for bringing transparency and credibility in the process of granting promotion under the Career Advancement Scheme.
- viii) Reorganization and integration of various faculties especially Social Science Faculties , around inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary courses can also help in bringing quality improvement in teaching, research and consultancy. UGC, ICSSR and other apex bodies or funding agencies can play a vital role in this regard.

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# TEACHING OF ECONOMICS IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

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**Social Science Research and Education :  
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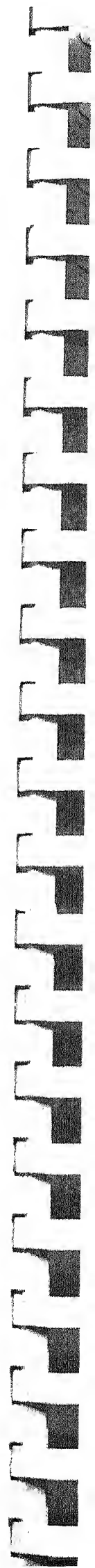


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## TEACHING OF ECONOMICS IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

By

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Economics has continued to be as one of the most 'sought-after' subjects of study in social sciences, as it has its relevance to every segment of the society and at the same time it also communicates with the changing needs and priorities of the society. In view of its dynamic nature, the up-dating as also the need for incorporating the various changes, both theoretical and empirically based applied aspects, in the course structure of Economics at the UG and PG levels cannot be over-emphasised.

Since the last UGC Model Curriculum of 2001, economic scenario at the national and international levels has significantly changed. Hence, while up-dating the curriculum in Economics at the UG and PG levels, following issues, amongst others, be incorporated in relevant Papers of Economics:

Issues relating to good governance have become extremely relevant and important in view of increasing incidence of crime, corruption and terrorism.

While the fact regarding the ascendancy of market and the role of the State in managing the economic system has appeared with new insights in theory as also in empirical studies, the global meltdown has once again drawn attention towards the need for State intervention. Hence, the role of the State needs to be re-examined and re-defined. In addition, the international financial system and the international financial institutions have to be strengthened and reformed to face challenges at the national and international levels.

The structure and magnitude of industrial and financial activities has undergone a considerable change. The emerging economies, such as India, have experienced 'mergers' and 'acquisitions' which were not even thought of in the past. Similarly, the quantum of foreign capital flows has become manifold. Therefore, priorities and safeguards relating to foreign direct investment (FDI), flows from foreign institutional investors (FII), need to be clearly worked out and priority areas identified.

The corporate sector of the economy has considerably grown and the variety of financial instruments has increased. Hence, the need for proper and effective corporate governance is much more urgent today than ever before. In addition, the smooth functioning of the capital market, with adequate safeguards, is called for to ensure the healthy growth of the corporate sector of the economy.

The need for social sector development in the context of ever growing awareness for a welfare State and development of physical infrastructure to meet the challenges at the global level is being realised at an expanding scale.

The environmental issues in general and in the context of global trade in particular are becoming increasingly important. Even when these issues do not get included in trade negotiations, the student community need to be educated and acquainted with these issues in the context of the Indian economy, as there is already tremendous depletion of natural resources leading to unsustainable development. The students, therefore, must know about the cost of development that is being incurred.

In addition, the following points be also considered:

Pass Course in Economics at the under-graduate level be continued as proposed in the UGC Model Curriculum of 2001, so that the subject of Economics does not lose its importance vis-a-vis other subjects. Further, 'bridge-course' be introduced at the UG level so that a 'Pass-course' student is not denied the opportunity of shifting to 'honours-course' in Economics.

The introduction of one year 'Bridge Course' is important from the point of view of horizontal and vertical mobility and the same should be introduced by those Universities which award B.A. Pass degree in Economics. The 'Bridge Course' will enable the 'Pass Course' student to study the left-over Papers (not taught at the B.A. Pass level) which are essential to obtain the B.A. Hons. Degree and also make them eligible for admission to the Post-Graduate course in Economics.

At the Post-Graduate level, the UGC Model Curriculum contains a comprehensive list of the Core Papers, in addition to a large number of Optional Papers which are relevant for the present day world. With the changing requirements, the contents of the Papers be up-dated. Additionally, Viva-Voce examination at the P.G. level be made compulsory which should, amongst other things, be based on a small Essay/Dissertation on some socio-economic issue of real life, preferably with orientation of applied quantitative analysis. This exposure will help to develop language skill as also the confidence of students to face the real world and also enable them to acquaint with the problems of the society.

The fact that uniformity of syllabi in all teaching institutions is not feasible due to various constraints and also because of the peculiar problems of the region, only a Model Syllabus is desirable so that inter-institutional and inter-State movement of students becomes feasible.

It is of utmost importance that the Paper on 'Indian Economy' ought to contain a module on 'The Economy of the State/Region' at both the UG and PG levels, so that a student is fully conversant with various aspects of the region or the State he/she comes from.

There is extreme inadequacy of books and other literature in Economics in Hindi and other regional languages. This is a great challenge for the teaching community. Therefore, such mechanism and incentives be devised by the UGC whereby this serious problem can be sorted out. Pending the availability of required literature in regional languages, teaching of English



language be made compulsory as a qualifying Paper at the under-graduate level for the students of Economics.

Finally, it may be noted that it is for the first time that the allocation for 'education' at 19.29 per cent is the highest in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan and is more than double of the Tenth Five-Year allocation (7.68 per cent). Further, higher education, within the education sector, has been allocated as much as 36 per cent in the Eleventh Five-Year plan, never witnessed during the last 60 years of Indian Planning in India. This reveals the priority of the Government towards education as also for higher education. However, the emphasis is primarily on quantitative expansion and the qualitative aspect of education continues to be neglected at the higher level as well. The increased expenditure/investment on education, including higher education, envisaged during the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, would prove to be rewarding only when course structure in various disciplines, including Economics, is prepared and implemented, ensuring required relevance and quality for the society and the nation as a whole.



## AN OVERVIEW

A. Vaidyanathan



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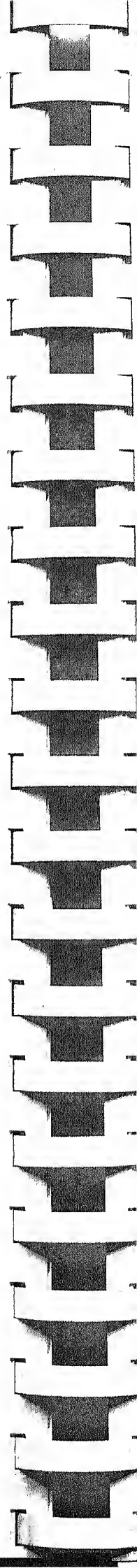


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# An Overview

A VAIDYANATHAN

An overview of the main recommendations of the Fourth Review Committee of the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

In recognition of the importance of social science research for development planning and policy the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was constituted by the government of India in 1969 as an entirely government funded national organisation that would promote social science research, but without placing it completely under governmental control.

## Achievements

The most important achievement of ICSSR has been its role in creating and supporting 27 national institutes in different parts of the country with state governments as funding partners. These institutes are free to decide and implement their research agenda subject only to periodic external reviews of their overall performance. They are active centres of research on regional social and developmental issues at the regional level.

Since its inception, the Council has funded some 3,000 research projects by scholars from universities, colleges and research institutes; awarded nearly 400 research fellowships, and 860 doctoral fellowships. It also provides a number of services (such as documentation, training in research methodology and use of computers, and bibliographic assistance) to help young researchers.

## Concerns

The functioning of the Council and its performance have been reviewed by external committees of scholars thrice in the past. The first review done in 1973 sought to provide a vision and a broad strategy for research promotion and also articulated concerns about the implications of the governance structure envisaged in the memorandum of association (MOA) for the autonomous and effective functioning of the Council. They were not in favour of any change at that point in time. The two subsequent external reviews – the

second one in 1976 and the third in 1986, reviewed the activities and functioning of the Council in considerable detail, highlighted weaknesses and made remedial suggestions. But these were not pursued seriously either by the Council or the government.

Meanwhile there is growing concern that ICSSR's impact on social science research has fallen far short of expectations. The Fourth Review Committee was constituted to review the performance of the ICSSR and to suggest ways of making it more effective. This paper is by way of a summary of its report (the full report is available on the ICSSR web site).

The disappointing performance of the Council is attributable in part to the sorry state of social science research generally and to weaknesses specific to the Council. Governments and public agencies, which have been the main source of funding independent scholarly research, continue to be sceptical of its value.

Social research is increasingly commercialised and driven by the interests and concerns of the sponsors as distinct from public interest. Commercialisation has led to the rapid growth of more lucrative opportunities for individuals, consultancies and non-government organisations (NGOs) in "research". The best of the graduates from premier institutions prefer to go to foreign universities and stay abroad after completing their doctorate.

The better performing students prefer to take jobs in information technology, financial services and even NGOs that offer salaries and career prospects which no academic or research institutions can match. The quality of postgraduate PhD students in social sciences, and the quality of their training have declined. These factors together have led to a decline in the supply of teachers in higher education. Even the best university departments are unable to attract high quality faculty.

Interest in and competence of academia for rigorous research on societal trends have also declined as the cumulative result of lowered standards for recruitment of teachers in colleges and universities and incentive systems that do not encourage,

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much less reward, quality of teaching and research. The report's survey of research articles in select social science journals showed that 40 per cent of authors were located in research institutes, and only a third in universities.

### Internal Weaknesses

Besides these systemic trends, ICSSR's performance has been severely impaired by external constraints and internal weaknesses specific to it. External constraints are the result of the basic features of its constitution, the manner in which it has operated and the availability of funds. The constitution of ICSSR, set out in its MOA, provides for a Council comprising ex officio members representing various departments of government and academicians nominated by the ministry of human resource development. The chairman of the Council and its member secretary are also selected by the government. Formally, though created and wholly funded by government, the Council is free to make its decisions as an autonomous body.

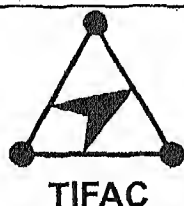
However, the MOA specifically makes these decisions and their implementation subject to government approval.

Ex officio government representatives presently constitute far too high a proportion of the Council membership. Appointments of the chairperson, member secretary and non-official members of the Council are all decided by the government. Lack of transparency in the criteria and procedures for these appointments and failure to observe the spirit of the provisions in the MOA have eroded the credibility of the Council as an autonomous and professional body.

The council is funded entirely by the ministry of HRD. While the quantum of grants has increased in absolute terms, they have been inadequate to meet the Council's commitments to meet the rising costs of the growing number of institutes it has sponsored. Allocations for projects and support services have been squeezed leaving little room for expansion. Inadequate budget allocations are compounded by arbitrary cuts, and cash flow problems

due to irregular release of funds. Grants to the Council are subject to stringent and rigid conditions regarding personnel policies for its staff as well as the terms of institutional grants, projects and fellowships. Cumulatively these have severely constrained the Council's capacity to plan and consistently pursue a coherent long-term strategy and prioritise different activities.

The salary structures approved by government are inadequate to attract and retain qualified academics in professional/managerial positions. These positions are now mostly staffed through internal promotions. Ad hocism in recruitments and promotions, as well as the inability of the Council (for lack of ministry approval) to ensure parity in salaries and benefits with those of government, has meant that the morale and motivation of Council staff are low. Internal organisation and procedures follow patterns typical of government departments. The mechanisms for appraisal of requests for grants, assessing their performance on the basis of rigorous and



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professionally credible peer review have been lax and ineffective.

### **Committee's Recommendations**

The following are the main recommendations of the Committee.

(a) **Crucial Importance of Autonomy:** Based on its detailed review of the Council's functioning and its extensive consultations with a wide spectrum of respected social scientists from across the country, the Committee is convinced that ICSSR can and must be enabled to play a lead role in promoting independent scholarly research. The report spells out measures to remove both external and internal constraints that currently impede the ICSSR's functioning.

Functional and financial autonomy of the Council is a necessary precondition. This requires major changes in its constitution to entrust overall governance of the Council to a governing body comprised of eminent scholars drawn from different social sciences, and a limited number of government representatives. The governing body will lay down the general policy. An executive council will be responsible to oversee its implementation by the Council's chairperson and chief executive. The report suggests that the reconstituted body be called the Indian Academy of Social Sciences and also spells out the criteria and processes by which these councils and executives will be chosen.

Subject to broad guidelines, the Executive Council should be free to decide, without any requirement to get government approval or clearance, all matters relating to the strategy of research funding; prioritising within different activities; mechanisms and procedures for giving grants and for monitoring and peer review of outputs; internal personnel policies and financial controls suited to the specific needs of the council. Periodic peer review of the Academy's overall performance in relation to its mandate by a committee of eminent social scientists should be mandatory.

(b) **Council's Mandate:** The Council's mandate should be to fund and support high quality social science research of a kind that documents, analyses and interprets different (economic, social and political) aspects of society, emerging trends and important

contemporary issues in a broader perspective and from multiple viewpoints. This has a crucial role for generating more knowledge and better insights which, in turn, helps policymakers, facilitates informed public policy, public discussion and a deepening of democracy. It should at the same time address the task of enlarging the pool and improving the quality of researchers and enlarge its support activities.

This calls for a significant expansion in the scale of its activities. Substantial increase in quantum and assurance of funding is therefore essential. Knowledge-generating research of the kind that the Council is expected to support calls for liberal public funding. While private sector and international funding agencies are unlikely to be interested in supporting such research, the Council may be left to decide whether and on what terms it accepts offers of funding from such sources.

The Committee has suggested that a mere 0.1 per cent of public sector plan outlay be earmarked for social science research. Since it covers practically all aspects of economy, society and politics, it would be appropriate that the government as a whole, rather than any individual department (as is the case at present), take the responsibility for funding.

The increased resources should be used to expand all major programmes (research institutes, research projects, fellowships and support services) and achieve a better balance between them. In order to be effective, the restructured Council needs to reorient its strategy for research funding along the lines indicated subsequently.

The Council should play an important role in increasing the pool of qualified researchers, by increasing the number of doctoral and research fellowships and bringing stipends on par with those of the University Grants Commission (UGC), and taking a proactive initiative to encourage and support, in collaboration with UGC, selected research institutes and universities in different parts of India to organise and conduct intensive and structured pre-PhD courses and specialised research methodology courses in social science.

The Committee also recommends a substantial expansion and reorientation of its Research Support activities for (a) expanding access to the library resources and

reducing costs by using computer networks in collaboration with other organisations; (b) continuing reviews of current Indian research in different disciplines and also of current state of knowledge in the thrust areas of research; (c) translating reviews of theoretical work and reviews of literature on selected themes into major Indian languages for wide distribution to college teachers and students; (d) facilitating access to and use of the rich material in regional language newspapers and periodicals; and (e) revival and reorganisation of the Data Archives unit.

(c) **Changing Strategy of Funding:** At present the bulk of research funding goes to the 27 national institutes. Inadequacy of grants to meet rising costs of even existing staff and facilities has forced them to depend increasingly on sponsored projects. This makes it difficult to pursue sustained work on specific themes. More importantly, under the current system, the magnitude and periodic revisions of grants to institutes are not related to their performance.

Funding for independent research projects is not only quite small (both in absolute terms and relative to those of institutes) but highly fragmented in terms of scope and objectives. The Council has not implemented suggestions to promote research around selected themes. Laxity in refereeing of proposals, and peer review of the output of research has resulted in inordinate delays and poor quality. Very little of the work is published.

In order to remedy this situation, the Committee has recommended that while projects and programmes on topics of individual researchers' choice should continue to be eligible for funding, a substantial part of its resources should be earmarked to projects/programmes relating to selected broad areas/themes. The aim should be to promote sustained, multi-institutional and interactive research on selected themes. The themes, to be chosen and changed periodically, should reflect contemporary social and economic concerns which are widely recognised to be important. Funding departments could indicate the broad themes on which they would like to be researched. However, the elaboration of the specific agendas and modalities of implementation should be decided by the academy through a credible



and transparent consultative process along the lines spelt out in the report.

Funding should be on a liberal scale with greater flexibility for grantees to decide, subject to broad guidelines, appointments, remunerations and other personnel matters. At the same time there should be effective incentives for timely completion of research and ensuring its high quality.

Such a strategy calls for major changes in the Council's current policies and practices for research funding. The Committee has suggested that the Council should not support any existing or new institutes on the present pattern. In respect of existing ICSSR institutes, the present system of recurring grants should be changed. Specifically, the quantum of block grants to be given to each institute be kept at roughly the current levels without any commitment to meet the rising costs of the core staff. But all of them, along with individual scholars or groups of them in other institutions (including universities and colleges), will be eligible to seek Council funding for individual projects and thematic research programmes including especially multi-year research programmes/projects. Proposals should spell out clearly the objectives, methodology, expected outputs and time schedules of their components. Decisions on funding will be based on recommendations of a transparent and rigorous peer review of proposals.

Final reports should be reviewed by independent scholars at the end of the programme with reference to the stated objectives, the quality of analysis and adherence to time schedules. Publication of results in refereed journals and as books/monographs, as well as rating the overall performance of institutions on this basis should be given much greater attention and weight in assessing performance than is presently the case.

The Council should rationalise and simplify monitoring systems, leaving grantees free to decide matters relating to their internal administration and utilisation of grants without having to obtain its approval. Focus should be on getting strategic and substantive information on the utilisation of grants and progress on programmes for which grants are given.

Renewal of research grants to institutions should not be automatic. In order to

ensure accountability in terms of both quality and meeting time schedules, each grant should be based on a fresh review of the programme proposals, taking into account earlier performance.

(d) **Internal Administration:** The internal organisation and administrative procedures of the Council should be thoroughly restructured to encompass a manifold increase in the scale of operations, significant changes in its mix and professional leadership of high quality. The Council should be free to determine and adapt personnel policies (staff structure, emoluments, qualifications, recruitment; evaluation and promotion criteria) in the light of its specific requirements.

The main job of the professional staff is managing research programmes and projects, rather than actually doing research. They should be trained in one or more social sciences and given special training in research management.

Open competitive recruitment should be the basis for selections. Serving employees should have the opportunity to compete for these positions, by availing of special training at the academy's expense to upgrade their skills.

The organisation should be made flatter, with a reduced number of administrative and support staff, by introducing computers for internal and external communication, maintenance of accounts and other records.

### Conclusions

The Fourth Review Committee of the Indian Council of Social Science Research has attempted to provide an overview of the current scenario and challenges facing social science research in India. Its recommendations seek to broaden the funding of the ICSSR, reconstituted as the Indian Academy of Social Sciences; give it the autonomy proper to an institution seized with the task of promoting social science research; and professionalise this institution and strengthen the peer dimension of its functioning, thereby restoring some of its eroded credibility. Above all, these recommendations are intended to further the larger purpose of encouraging independent social research oriented to generating knowledge.

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# INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN INDIA

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## IASSI Conference on Social Science Research and Education : Trends and Issues

6-7 November 2009

Organised by



**GIRI INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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## 1. Higher Education in India

Both in quality and quantitative terms level of school education in India is very low. With large government funding, universal education till the age of 14 years is being sought through implementation of the right to education bill from 2009. Given the track record of public schooling programme, continuous evaluation and modification of the programme need to be carried out in order to impart a reasonably quality education to children at large in India.

Higher education in terms of number of institutions and enrolment has increased over the years. The rate of increase has been much faster after the process of liberalization of the Indian economy started in 1991. Much of the increase in higher education since 1991 has been in the technical/ professional education field. Private sector unaided educational institutions ( colleges and deemed universities) have played a major role in this increase. In 2005-06, of a total of 10,468 thousand enrolled students, 3,220 thousand (30.76%) were in private universities, unaided deemed universities and colleges. Foreign institutions also have emerged in the scene enrolling about eight thousand student enrollment in 2005-06 (Agarwal 2006). Bringing about changes in the rules governing the system has definitely allowed increasing higher education in professional courses especially in the private sector. There are certainly large problems with respect to the way the educational institutions especially in the private sector function. But the role of private sector in expanding education in the professional courses cannot be underemphasized. Since about 2008 Government of India has taken further initiatives in setting up new universities and institutes of technology, management and sciences.

Gross enrollment ratio in higher education in India is quite low at about 10 percent. In countries like South Korea it is over 80 percent. But given India's low per capita income, one need not be too unhappy about the low enrollment ratio in higher education especially since the ratio is increasing over time. The fact that education in professional courses (engineering, management, law and other courses that teaches the skills to enter production system directly) is increasing in importance over time is something to be welcomed. Usually for educated persons with higher education, the rate of



unemployment is higher than it is for all the adult persons willing to work. For persons with degrees and diplomas in professional courses, however, the rate of unemployment is much lower than other persons having higher education.

In spite of enrollment in physical and social sciences not growing as much as it is in professional courses, the share of physical and social sciences in total enrollment of students in higher education is quite large in absolute terms. In 2004-05, of the total enrollment of students in higher education, 46 percent was in Arts subjects and 20 percent was in Science and 18 percent was in commerce. Enrollment in education, engineering, law, medicine, agriculture, veterinary sciences and others was 16 percent (UGC). The share of arts and pure science subjects in total enrollment is certainly quite high and one can find reasons for the share to decline. However, students doing the professional courses need to be sensitized about the history and functioning of the society, economy and polity. Thus there would have to be more teachers from social sciences teaching in applied sciences programmes.

As we perceive, the problem as such is not of quantity but of quality of education in physical and social sciences in the country in general. It is also to be noted that bulk of the education especially in social sciences is in the public sector institutions. Thus government policies have a direct bearing and government has a large role in uplifting the quality of education in both pure and social sciences.

We first enumerate here some problems facing education and research in social sciences and suggest some remedial measures.

## **2. Some Problems in Social Science Education and Research**

Social sciences are no more attracting top ranking students in large numbers. This would be because doing a professional course or a course in pure sciences one has a better prospects of employment. There are also placement services for these courses in many institutions with high salaries.

The state governments have especially been not giving enough funds to the universities and colleges teaching social sciences as well as pure sciences. Raising funds

through increase in fees is also most often resisted by government as well as the student body. Teacher student ratio is very low. In such a scenario enforcing accountability on the part of teachers becomes a problem. Given that performance in the examination does not directly affect job prospects of majority of students, students also take the study lightly. There is interference by government in the appointment as well functioning of universities.

Remuneration of teachers is in general lower in education department or in the government than in the private sector for a bright person. There are 'academic perks' as well. With six pay commission report, salaries have gone up considerably. Salaries are not necessarily lower for those teaching social sciences than other subjects. Thus for a student pursuing a degree in social sciences, employability is a problem, level of salaries would not necessarily be a big problem in attracting bright students into teaching the subject.

Incentive and facilities for doing research at the college and university level is hardly there. Even promotions are not necessarily based on research output or teaching evaluations. In such a scenario to expect high degree of research output is also not to be expected.

### **3. Institutional Changes for Better Performance**

Rather than opening new colleges and universities by state governments, there would be a need to consolidate the existing ones by giving better facilities. The central government with its better financial capabilities should expand facilities and universities especially for teaching of social sciences alongwith pure sciences. There would be a large number of aspirants willing to do a BA/MA degree. Facilities to pursue this especially in social sciences can be provided at some cost through the distance education mode.

As suggested by Yash Pal committee, Ministry of Human Resource Development there is a need for integrating undergraduate and graduate education as is the case in many good universities in the world. For this there is a need for having unitary



universities and developing mechanisms (seminars, conferences and peer review) for close interaction between teachers and students of different universities.

Some incentives being given for research publications and noteworthy evaluation of courses by students can go a long way in developing a culture of teaching and research in the colleges and universities. Incentives can be in terms of allowing better promotion prospects, making available funds for conducting research and attending seminars and conferences, and allowing sabbatical leaves.

There are 27 institutes/centres in India spread over almost as many states and being supported by ICSSR and the state governments. Research output by these institutes/centres have been observed to be much better than those by university departments. But this is only to be expected given that their primary duty is doing research with no or minimal teaching. With low teacher student ratio, university and college teachers would have to spend considerably amount of their time in teaching and related activities. Thus they cannot be expected to publish as much as the ICSSR institutes/centres have been doing.

As Vaidyanathan Committee has suggested ICSSR (changing its name to Indian Academy of Social Sciences) can be changed into a self-governing body with little government interference and appointment of its governing council being rested with social scientists of repute drawn from different disciplines. Guha (2008) has some misgivings on this saying that unlike physical sciences social sciences have different schools of thought and social scientists may engage in infightings hampering the work of the proposed academy. But in any case government appointing the governing council would not be tenable for a healthy growth of the study of social sciences in India. A culture of accommodation with representation from different schools of thought in the proposed academy would need to be developed and hopefully it will not be a very difficult task either.

Yash Pal Committee of Ministry of Human resource Development (2008) has suggested setting up of a Commission of Higher Education comprising of all fields of higher education like technical (professional) education, pure sciences and social sciences both in the public and private sectors. Functioning of this commission is again to be in

the hands of academicians its governing council being appointed through an act of the parliament. Academy for Social Sciences can then function under this commission promoting research and teaching not only in the Social Science institutes but in the university departments as well. The present ICSSR institutes/centres operate as completely autonomous bodies with not much interaction with the universities. Mechanisms need to be brought forth whereby with their autonomy in tact these institutes/centres are able to interact with university departments in their vicinity.

Another issue of interest that arises is whether the ICSSR institutes/centres and social science departments in universities be more concerned with self-initiated research into themes they feel important in explaining changes in the society, economy and polity. Clearly it is imperative that it is done as nobody else would likely be doing this important job. Such type of research would involve both theoretical and empirical research. Especially for the empirical type of work, government funding as presently being given as research grants by UGC and ICSSR need to be strengthened.

One should not however shun sponsored research as not only that it would help finances of the higher education institutions but also such research has the potential of giving insights into real problems. It also often leads to implementation of new ideas directly. Some incentives can be given to researchers getting sponsored research. The finances generated through this route would help financing self-initiated research.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Given the level of per capita income and the present extent of spread of higher education in India, it does not call for undue worry with regard to its magnitude as is the case with school education. However, there are various problems in respect of quality of higher education especially in pure and social sciences in India. In order to overcome these problems there is a need to bring about institutional changes. In stead of spreading money and efforts too thinly, one can consolidate the universities and colleges by funding them more adequately. To integrate undergraduate and graduate education, there is a need for developing unitary universities. Yash Pal committee recommendations with respect to higher education in general and Vaidyanathan committee recommendations with

respect to social sciences need to be given serious thoughts. There would be a need to give more emphasis on research in social sciences having a right mix of self-initiated and sponsored research.

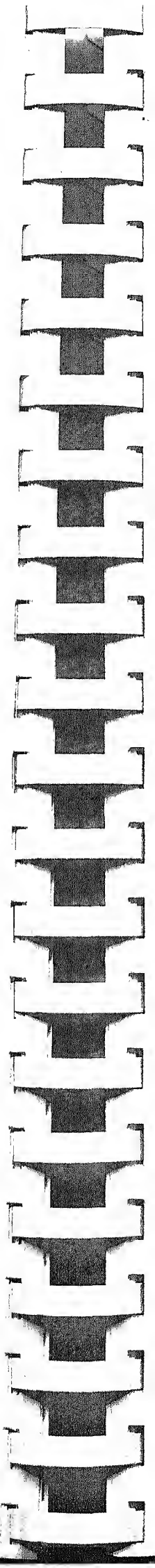
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# INDIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE : NEED FOR REORIENTATION

Yogesh Atal



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## INDIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE : Need for Reorientation

Yogesh Atal

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### Preliminary Remarks

It is with a strange feeling that I begin my presentation. The theme of this Conference and the auspices under which it is being discussed owe an association with a person who left this world only a few days prior to this event. I refer to my dear friend of long standing, Professor A.K. Dasgupta who selflessly served this Association as its Member-Secretary for several years and died while working for it. I was privileged to have discussions with him over the phone on the "Concept Paper" for this theme. He shared with me the earlier draft and sought my comments. He was keen to see me participate in this meeting, and he disallowed me to decline the invitation. Referring to my role as UNESCO's Regional adviser for Social and Human Sciences for Asia and the Pacific, he called me "a missionary" for social sciences, and regarded my participation absolutely necessary.

Still not being able to overcome the grief of his loss, I am hurt again by the death of yet another selfless promoter of social sciences in India – my teacher and mentor Professor Brij Raj Chauhan. He died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November; I come here after attending his funeral in Udaipur – the place from where he initiated teaching of sociology in Rajasthan in the early 1950s.

I dedicate this paper to the memory of these two social scientists with whom I had years of contact and interaction. I came in contact with Professor Chauhan in 1955 when I was still an undergraduate; Dasgupta and I joined Panjab University the same year, i.e. 1960.

I pay my homage to both the departed souls.

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On purpose, I began with a sentimental note on the passing away of these two nationally known social science personalities. Their personal academic history provides me a good launching pad for initiating this discussion.

My association with these two personas takes us back to the late 1950s.





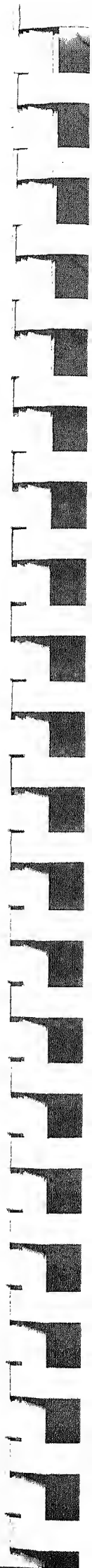
Let me paint with a broad brush the situation of social sciences in India of those years.

Both Dasgupta and Chauhan had their degrees in Economics, but in today's context one would be classed as an economist, and the other as a sociologist.

Chauhan taught me the first lessons in sociology and introduced me to social anthropology, in which I earned a degree from the University of Saugar, then headed by professor S.C. Dube. Incidentally, Dube's basic degree was in Political Science and he taught that subject at Lucknow when Professor D.N. Majumdar had just succeeded in creating a separate Department of Anthropology. Majumdar invited Dube to teach some courses in Anthropology and assist him in editing *Eastern Anthropologist*. Though Majumdar was trained in Anthropology at Kolkata and later in the United Kingdom, he was brought to Lucknow by Professor Radha Kamal Mukherjee who was then heading the department of Economics. It was Professor Radha Kamal Mukherjee, and his colleague Professor D.P. Mukherji, who introduced sociology courses in Economics. Majumdar gained entry in this department as a lecturer in Primitive economics. That is how anthropology was smuggled in. Economics teaching in Lucknow became interdisciplinary with the introduction of sociology and anthropology. Those graduating from it had formal degrees in Economics but branched out either as specialists in economics or in sociology. Chauhan was a product of that unique combination, officially an economics graduate but with specialization in sociology and a Ph.D. with Majumdar in Anthropology.

Just as Lucknow became the birthplace of sociology in North India, Bombay University took the lead in Central India where a Human Geographer from New Zealand began sociology courses; he was joined by G.S. Ghurye – a scholar of Sanskrit texts or an Indologist, who was sent to England for some formal training in Sociology but where he was chose to learn anthropology. Another colleague Toothi, and an early student of that Department – M.N. Srinivas – also went to England for specialization and both returned as trained social anthropologists. Srinivas started the Department of Sociology at Baroda and then came to Delhi School of Economics to set up a Department of Sociology.

Lucknow took a lead in organising All India Sociological Conference which had a section in Sociology, another on Social Anthropology, a third on Social Psychology, and the fourth on Statistics and Research Methodology. Bombay established the Indian Sociological Society. The orientations of the two organizations were different – one more interdisciplinary and the other moving towards establishing a distinct identity for sociology. With the separation of Anthropology and sociology (and social work) from the Department of Economics



in Lucknow interdisciplinary orientation began suffering a setback and the academic politics was fuelled by separatism.

A similar thing began happening in the Bombay circle. The Department of Sociology at Poona University then was led by two stalwarts – Irawati Karve and Y.B. Damle. Both were products of Bombay but Damle was enamoured by Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton and Karve by Indology and Anthropology – both social and physical. They set up two camps within the same department.

In the late 1950s when Dasgupta and I entered the academia, sociology and anthropology were relatively new entrants and were taught at a few universities in India. In fact, they were struggling to gain recognition on the one hand, and were quarrelling, on the other, for their separate territories. Social sciences were then vaguely defined and the subjects claiming that affiliation were generally clubbed in the faculty of Arts. Anthropology was placed at some places in the science faculty and at others in the Arts. In those days, there was no independent faculty of social sciences in India.

It was in such a milieu that the Panjab University in Chandigarh set up departments of sociology and anthropology. This new University appointed in 1960 A.K. Dasgupta – a product of Calcutta – in Economics, Prakash Pimpley – a product of Poona – in sociology, and me in Anthropology. As young and new settlers in Chandigarh we came closer and spent several evenings together. The common theme of our discussion and argument was the placement of our disciplines. Dasgupta at that time thought of Economics as the only discipline that was scientific and with his algebraic competence he made us feel small. Pimpley was under the spell of Damle and firmly believed that anthropologists should not be clubbed with sociologists. As a student of Brij Raj Chauhan and S.C. Dube my position was more interdisciplinary and I was made to feel as an intruder by sociologists and a defector by physical anthropologists. But those evening sessions, with Dasgupta preparing Lopchu tea for us, were indeed very illuminating.

Although remaining an economist until the last, Dasgupta had become, in his later years, a true missionary and an advocate of social sciences; I moved from Panjab University to Agra Institute of Social Sciences to teach Sociology – and to teach Parsons and Merton. Pimpley continued at Chandigarh but became less rigid in his gate keeping function as a sociologist and accepted people like us as part of his tribe. I could not have imagined then that an advocate of the pure breed like Dasgupta would plan a conference to emphasize the need for reorientation of social sciences. Dasgupta the economist of the early days had become promoter of social sciences, breaking disciplinary barriers.

Remembering and paying tribute to A.K. Dasgupta and Brij Raj Chauhan on this occasion and at this venue thus assumes special significance. Both of them have enormously contributed in terms of strengthening the fraternity of



social sciences and breaking the artificial barriers of individual disciplines. The fact that the type of atmosphere in which people of my age entered the academe has drastically changed and a strong urge is felt not only for interdisciplinarity but for transdisciplinarity.

The challenges that social sciences faced in the 1950s and 1960s were vastly different from the current challenges. Being recent in origin, social science manpower in India at that time was minimal, and was ill equipped. Many aspects of Indian society had not been studied, and those studied during the colonial regime were largely anthropological – that is related to the tribal communities that constituted a small percentage of the total population.. The social scientists were trained to do the empirical work, but were not prepared to answer all the queries posed by the bureaucrat-in-hurry. Untested theories imported from the West and dearth of data on Indian society characterised Indian social science of those days.

Our universities adopted the Western model of "disciplinarization and professionalization of knowledge, that is to say, by the creation of permanent institutional structures designed both to produce new knowledge and to reproduce the producers of knowledge".<sup>1</sup> As an aside, let me say that in the West there were five main locales for social science activity, where five principal disciplines were included in the social science category. The locales were Great Britain, France, the Germanies, the Italies, and the United States; and the subjects were history, economics, sociology, political science, and anthropology.<sup>2</sup> Leaving aside anthropology that focussed on the study of "other cultures", the "quartet of history, economics, sociology, and political science, as they became university disciplines in the nineteenth century (and indeed right up to 1945), not only were practiced in the five countries of their collective origin but were largely concerned with describing social reality in the same five countries".<sup>3</sup> These disciplines were nomothetic but they generated theories that were not universal; however, we unquestioningly borrowed them.

By the time the social sciences gained entry in India, the recognition crisis was already over in the West and good stock of empirical knowledge about their "present" had been created. They had well-developed infrastructure and adequate manpower. Social sciences in the West were already engaged in the battle of paradigms, and were becoming autonomous in terms of funding support. On all these indicators, social sciences in India had a contrasting profile. At that time the focus was on introduction of social sciences in the university curricula, gaining recognition in planning and decision-making bodies, carrying out empirical researches on themes of national relevance and on un-researched territories, and publication and dissemination of research findings. Quite

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<sup>1</sup> See the Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences, *Open the Social Sciences* (chairman: Immanuel Wallerstein). Stanford University Press, 1996. Page 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Page 20.





naturally, the West served as the positive reference group, and the natives trained abroad took the leadership of the profession and encouraged use of theory and methodology developed in the West.

It is during this phase of initial expansion, and somewhat unquestioned replication of outside paradigms, that scholars began to feel a bit uncomfortable. They discovered inadequacies of the conceptual frameworks, inapplicability of several research techniques in the non-Western context, and inability of Western theories to explain the non-Western phenomena. This gave rise to debate and discussion and raised a call for *Indigenization*. This call for *Indigenization* was not for creating a separate social science for each individual country, but for the *de-parochialization* of the Western theory that was claiming to be the universal. I regard Indigenization as

1. A plea for self-awareness and rejection of a borrowed consciousness. It emphasizes the need for an insider view so as to promote thoughtful analysis of our own society to replace the existing trend of knowing ourselves via the West.
2. An advocacy for alternative perspectives on human societies with a view to making the social sciences less parochial.
3. A pointer towards historical and cultural specificities and a call for the redefinition of focus, with a view to developing dynamic perspectives on national problems.

The situation of social sciences in India today has changed. Social science enterprise today has an impressive presence: more and more universities are opening departments of social sciences; research institutes have been set up both within the universities, and outside, to specially focus on social science research; research cells have been created within various ministries, and in the corporate sector; and professional and technical institutions have recognized the importance of social sciences in the training of professionals. Social science culture is diffusing in the public domain: frequent employment of social science vocabulary and methodology in public and political debates and discussions, and in journalistic writings; Public Opinion polls, market research, and psephological analyses and forecasts are all indicators of increasing acceptance of the social sciences. Not only this, even the natural and physical sciences have acknowledged the significance of a social science orientation in their own work.

It is no longer necessary for the social sciences to beat their own drum. The vocabulary of social sciences, and the methodology used by them, is becoming part of common parlance amongst the intelligentsia. The growing demand for management sciences, the use of survey research techniques in gauging voting behaviour and predicting election outcomes, and now the debates



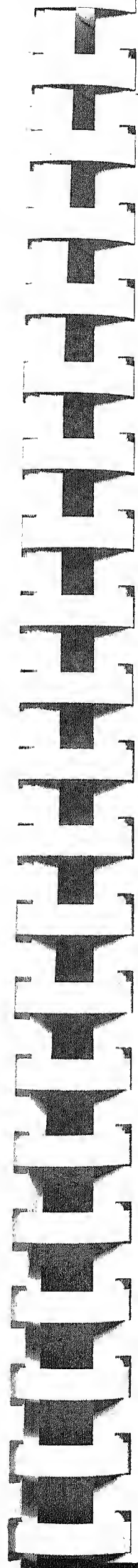
surrounding demographic data generated by the Census Organization are clear examples of spread of social science culture. Social scientists have also begun writing for the media, and they are being invited for debates and discussions in TV talk shows.<sup>4</sup>

Alongside of the growth of social sciences -- measured in terms of number of social science institutions, social science practitioners and students, volume of social science publications -- the social and political scene has also drastically changed. Worldwide the literacy percentage has gone up, but also the figures for poverty and unemployment have risen. There is rise of indigenous scholarship. Politically, a new world order is in the making with the end of the cold war and the collapse of Communist states. We are witnessing the spread of liberal democracy, dominance of market forces, integration of global economy, transformation of production systems and labour markets, spread of technological change, and media revolution and consumerism. These developments question the relevance of both the Western and the Marxist paradigms of development. There is a universal acknowledgement that deficits in the field of social development mark every country irrespective of its level of economic development. It implies that neither the capitalist, nor the communist, model of development has been able to bring about social development. There is, therefore, search for doable strategies to address to the common problems that defy common solutions. The new concern has brought the social sciences to the fore and given culture a central place in developmental thinking.

The challenges of population growth, environmental crisis (caused by depletion of resources, and pollution), globalizing influences of dramatic revolution in the technosphere and infosphere are all influencing the architecture of human civilization. For the continuing and emerging crises in the social sphere, it is now widely realised that mere technological breakthroughs are not enough. Both for handling the existing crises of social development and resolving the problems created in the social, political, cultural and economic spheres, and for fashioning the future, the need for effective involvement of the social sciences is universally recognized. It is now clear that the future growth of knowledge would depend on the ability of science and social sciences to rediscover areas of convergence. They will have to innovatively combine different disciplines and different modes of enquiry to understand the ever-increasing complexity of our universe. This would require opening out of the sciences by breaking disciplinary boundaries and effectively pursuing not only interdisciplinary but transdisciplinary orientation in our research and thinking. It is a call for decolonization of the mind-set and for a search of alternative models to organize knowledge. In the changed context, social sciences need no longer play the second fiddle to science and

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<sup>4</sup> The latest example is about the use of the word "indigenous". The Delhi Edition of Times of India of 30 September 2004 has an item on page 13, titled, "We are tribals, not indigenous". The Report says: "The government's decision amounts to a rejection of the demand by certain groups that tribal people should be classified as "indigenous", a term popular with Western sociologists and anthropologists." In my discussion on *Indigenization of Social Sciences* I have distinguished between indigenous and indigenized.



technology. In fact, the spectacular achievements in the sphere of science and technology, which resulted in IT Revolution, and moved the world toward an information society, have created enormous ground for social sciences. The newly created hardware and software demand a new focus on *humanware*.

Indian social science has reached a take-off stage. Now that there is a general call for *opening the social sciences*, as articulated by the Gulbenkian Commission, I feel that Indian social science stands in a better position to create interdisciplinary – even transdisciplinary – structures within the academe.

There are five major challenges that we face today, namely that of

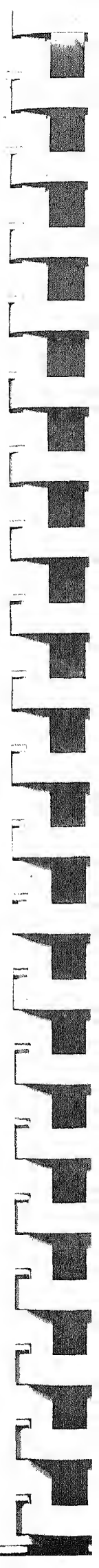
1. Updating teaching curricula and providing them with an interdisciplinary orientation, and introducing social sciences at the school level;
2. Consolidating the findings of research done hitherto and systematising contributions to theory, methodology, and to the understanding of Indian society and culture;
3. Immediately attending to the current and pressing problems of the society through empirical research and participation in policy making and plan implementation;
4. Identifying the lacunae and setting an agenda to complete the unfinished tasks; and
5. Participating in the preparation of blueprints for the future.

Current research in social science in the country is highly diffused, underrated, and generally ignored by the potential users. While there are sporadic attempts for identifying the *thrust areas* for research in social sciences, there is a need to make this a serious and a coordinated exercise. We need to promote both micro-level studies and large-scale surveys.

There is great scope for doing comparative research involving more than one region of the country. Scholars from one region should be encouraged to carry out studies in another region.

There is an urgent need to explore and strengthen action research potential. This would entail strengthening research facilities of institutions engaged in such research programmes and also by enhancing the skills in this field. Issues relevant to the Indian society must get the central place in teaching and research.

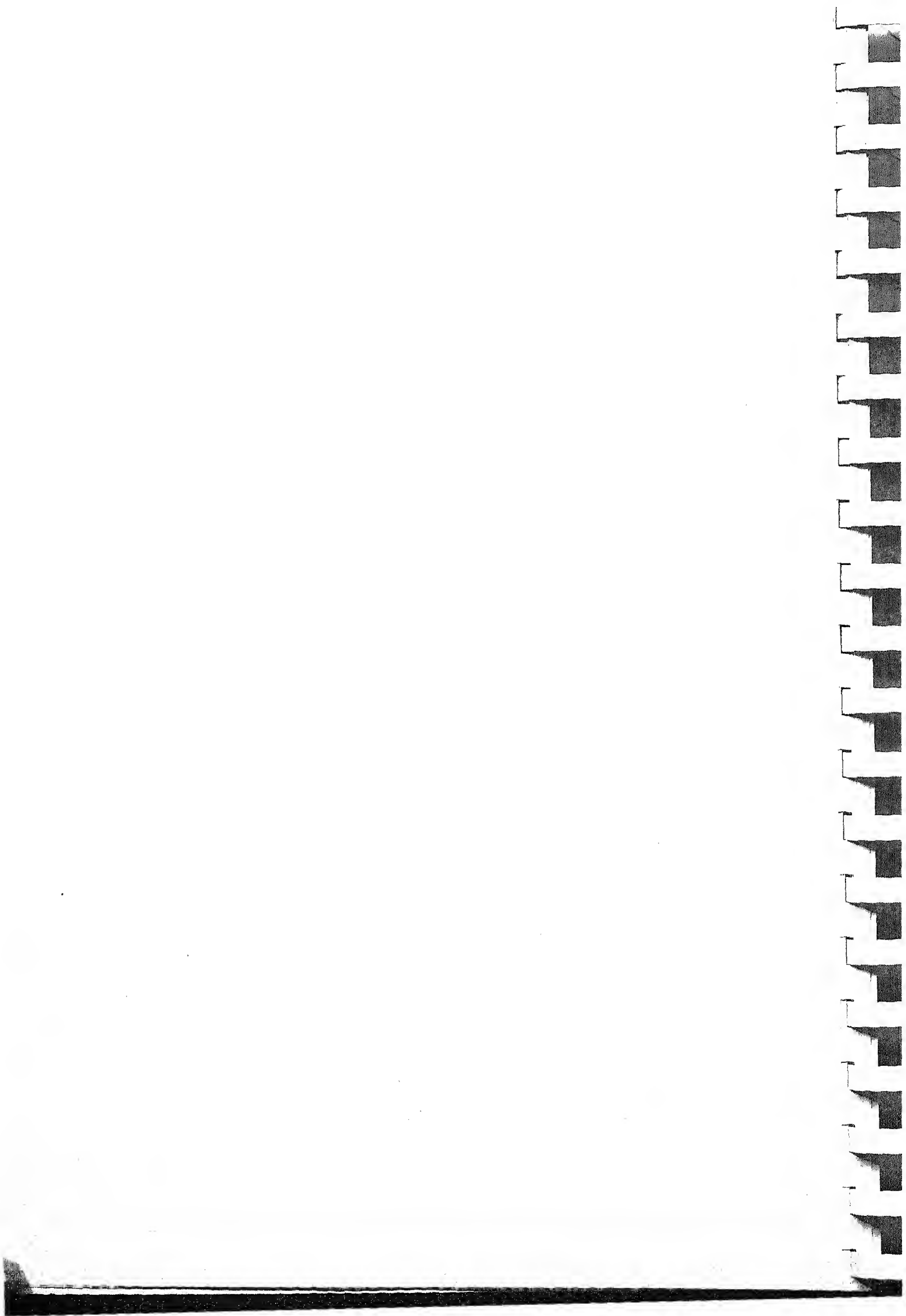
The urgent need is to develop a fresh prioritisation of agenda for research.



There exists a general feeling that social science research is not sufficiently relevant to national needs and government policy. This is mainly due to the gap that exists between the producers of research and its consumers. Even when the government department funds the research, the findings remain unutilised. Furthermore, not only the government agencies do not utilize the findings of social science research, even the professional community shows relative indifference towards research carried out within the country. Research published in the national languages reach, if at all, other countries after considerable delay. A corrective in this regard is establishment of suitable mechanisms for interactions between social science researchers and their users.

As we stand today, at the threshold of the second decade of the new millennium, we have a different vantage point. In the last sixty years, social sciences in India have attained certain maturity. Now is the time when they should reorient their work in the light of the coming tomorrow. Rather than letting autonomous forces to lead us to an uncertain future, social sciences should participate in the process to determine the country's future destination and to devise desirable paths to reach there. Social scientists are called upon not only to anticipate the demands that the future society will make upon them but also to assess the totality of needs of society in the coming years. The future of social sciences is linked to the future of our society. The way social sciences will shape themselves, and rise or decline in their popularity, will depend on the manner in which they will attend to the future needs and demands of society.





# **MENTAL HEALTH OF WOMEN : RESEARCH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Anita Ravindran**  
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Kerala



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## **Mental Health of Women: Lacuna in Research and Community Development**

**(Prof. Anita Ravindran, University of Calicut, Kerala)**

Social Science Research and Education are inextricably linked to community / social development with the common objective of welfare of the society. Welfare of the society is in the welfare of its individual members.

In India since its independence efforts have been made at various levels of policy making as well as implementation for improving the quality of life of its people. The task of social development was further taken up with specific objectives and scientific fervor by the social scientists. However, as it appears, outcome of the joint efforts seems to lag behind the aspired levels due to some of the following factors:

- the multicultural framework of Indian people.
- intervention of scientific, technological, economic and sociopolitical changes emerging simultaneously.
- gap between academic/scientific output and social action programs at par with the social dynamism.
- urbanisation, industrialisation and globalisation.

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Paper presented at the National Level Conference organised by Indian Association of Social Science Institutions (IASSI) at Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009.



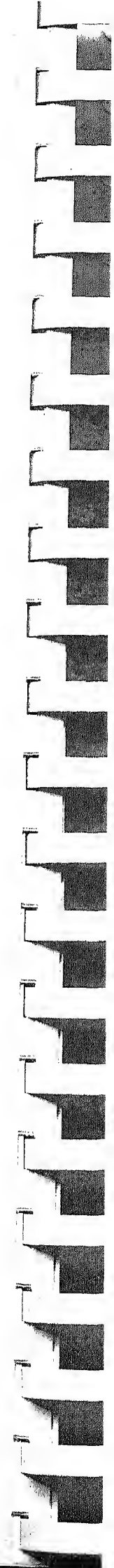
Social development is a multidimensional task involving modifications and reconstructions at various levels and in different domains. In this context this paper is an attempt to trigger a collective thought or review on two points:

- (i) State of Mental Health of women in contemporary Indian societies.
- (ii) Relevance of Mental Health of women in Community Development.

"Mental Health refers to an individual's ability to negotiate the daily challenges and social interactions of life without experiencing undue emotional or behavioural incapacity; mental health is more than just absence of mental disorders" (Kahn and Fawcett, 2004, p.257).

'Subjective Wellbeing' is a significant component of mental health which is defined by Diener, Suh & Oishi (1997) as to how people evaluate their lives in terms of variables such as life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, lack of depression and anxiety, and positive moods and emotions. Well being, therefore, is not limited to objective fitness or competence but also includes a person's perceived quality of life.

Like other areas of research and education Health Care also was primarily based on generalisations neglecting gender differences. In the west (UK & US) women's health issues started gaining attention in the 1970s. But, since 1960s impact of multiple roles on women's health was a matter of concern that resulted in the proposition of two hypothesis: 'The scarcity





hypothesis' and 'The enhancement/expansion hypothesis' (Goode, 1960; Sieber, 1974 and Marks, 1977).

In India, community based mental health care was initiated in mid 1970s at the PGI Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh & NIMHANS at Bangalore; but the National Mental Health Program was launched only in 1982.

Although about half of the national population happens to be women negligence or inadequacy in mental health care has seriously affected women. Mental health of women still remains either marginalised or unattended or neglected to a great extent.

Besides being burdened with multiple roles in the family, traditionally women are also considered to be providers of health care to others, either as professionals at the periphery or as lay persons. As stated by Wade and Tavis (1987) mental health and well being do not entirely depend on the individual alone but also on people around: family, friends, neighbours and others, for cognitive, emotional and tangible support.

A large no. of studies on physical and mental health irrespective of cultural diversities has proved family, as the micro social system, to be a buffer. Women have a vital role in this dynamism.

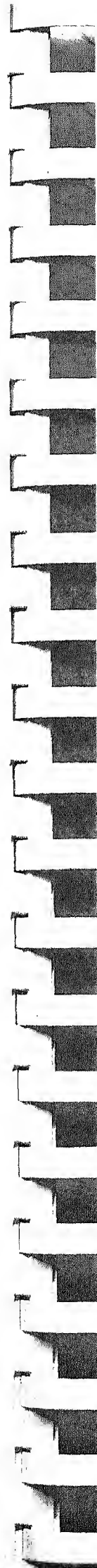


The feminist movements have focussed mainly on issues related to equality of men and women in work/family as a collective problem. Their attempts, certainly to an extent, have succeeded in gender sensitising the public and empowering women economically, intellectually, socially and politically. At this juncture the question arises:

- **are contemporary women in a better state of well being?**
- **could these attempts promote mental health of women?**

Gender and mental health became a topic of discussion at 'Anveshi', 2001 (Research Centre for Women Studies, Hyderabad) which initiated the idea of considering mental health in all women's issues (Dawar, 2001). Hegde (2001) reported a higher rate of mental illness in women as compared to men based on a secondary analysis of epidemiological data.

Available statistics show that beginning of the century has brought in new challenges to the mental health of women as physical health problems like cancer, AIDS, diabetics, CHD, BP, etc. In addition to this, the equally increasing health problems of their spouses or/and children are also factors which affect mental health of women. Thus contemporary women are more vulnerable to mental health problems as compared to their counterparts a decade ago.



Yet another significant factor that could be related to mental health of women is the increasing no. of social problems like drug abuse, separation, divorce, individual and family suicide etc.

A psychosocial analysis of the physical health problems and social problems clearly suggests the following:

- risk education efforts as part of community development are inadequate.
- risk education efforts have been focussing more on physical health of men (related to CHD, diabetics, alcohol/drug addiction etc.).
- risk education efforts have been including only reproductive health factors in women.
- the core of the social system, the family, is drifting apart.

Weston (1998) reported that psychological well being of a person is strongly affected by the quality of marital relationship and family life.

So far, what is on the surface or what is very obvious in the contemporary health and social scenario has been looked into. Now, examining the Research and Educational sector it is further disappointing to note that no significant effort has been made to monitor the impact of the

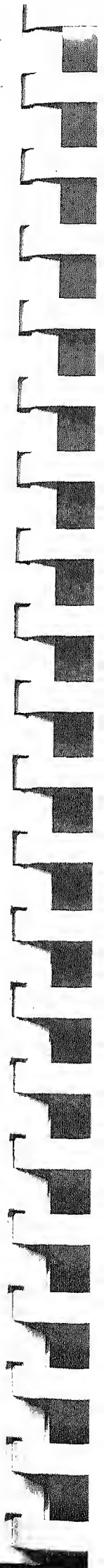


socio-educative programs in community development or the women empowerment programs launched as part of social welfare strategies.

Most of the community health programs focus on the rural sector with emphasis on health education, health promotion, primary education, gender sensitisation, women empowerment and reproductive health while the urban dwellers whose quality of physical life seems to be better are caught up in the web of urbanisation posing tremendous threat to their psychological well being are comparatively neglected. That the urban population is more vulnerable and prone to mental ill health is evident from the data which shows that most developed states in India have a higher rate of suicide with self employed the highest (24%) and housewives in the second place (21%) (<http://nitawriter.....>, 28.10.09).

Similar are the trends in the case of divorce rates with the three metropol: Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai taking the lead. In the past 4 years the rate in Delhi has doubled. Kerala, the most literate state, shows an increase by 350% in the last 10 years (<http://www.indidivorce.com>, 28.10.09). This trend of dissolution of marriage is attributed to the empowerment of women which has either made them less tolerant and less compromising or due to ego clashes. Consonant with these deductions is the findings of a doctoral research by Malini (2007) that more educated women have lower





marital adjustment with their alcoholic spouses than their less educated counterparts.

These, in no way imply that the present community development programs are futile but it suggests that some unforeseen negative factors have emerged as interactional effects or as new challenges which tend to attenuate the positive outcomes of the efforts.

Considering the basic philosophy of Community Development (CD), that the hidden potentials in each individual are to be identified and developed in such a way that they add to the competence in enhancing the physical, social and subjective wellbeing of the people; two issues seem to be deliberated upon by the social scientists:

- (a) the need to modify the existing CD strategies.
- (b) the need to identify the intervening negative factors likely to emerge during the course of implementation of CD strategies.

Most of the researches have tried to identify the advantages or positive outcomes of CD policies and strategies like increase in literacy level, improvement in health care system etc. barring a few on new physical health problems due to the change in life styles.

Research and education on the dynamics of alarmingly increasing rates of mental health problems and social problems among the empowered and



developed societies is highly warranted. Some of the guidelines that could be adopted in such attempts are:

- a comparative evaluation of the more developed and less developed societies.
- a longitudinal analysis of the output of CD strategies with respect to social and mental health of the target groups.
- analysis of gender differences with respect to the impact of CD programs.
- at the implementation level CD has to be an interdisciplinary team work in which academicians are to play a key role.

#### **Why Mental Health of Women Need to be Addressed?**

1. According to the reports of a few researchers contemporary women have to encounter more stresses due to (a) the multidimensional social change resulting in the increased dimensions of multiplicity of roles (b) longevity. It is also found that the psychosocial and functional status aspects of women are relatively inferior to those of men (Finch & Groves, 1983; Chao, Chadha, Majumdar and Sharma, 2007).
2. A review of social changes and related statistics shows that considerable stratification has occurred among the womenfolk of the country during the past few years adding new entities like



employed/unemployed at different levels, married/widowed/divorced/separated etc. Each stratum has unique psychosocial challenges which, hence, have differential effects on their subjective well being.

3. Mental health of women need to be studied on a sociocultural level because the stresses and strains of women are partly due to the complex social factors.
4. Although the proportion of studies on women is unsatisfactory, the results are quite encouraging and supporting the need for a differential understanding of the mental health of women.
5. A mentally healthy woman only can contribute to the peace and prosperity of the family and become a model or catalyst for the healthy development of the next generation. And healthy families only can ensure a healthy society.
6. Psychoeducative counselling can enhance the coping skills and subjective well being of women (Malini, 2007).

#### **Some issues for deliberation**

In this august gathering of learned experts of various disciplines of Social Science from different parts of the nation some issues for collective discussion are put forward:

- **How to empower women preserving the family?**



- How to make CD strategies more positive from both individual and social perspective?
- Documentation and compilation of researches on mental health of women in India.
- The procedure for funding has to be simplified and a proportion to be marked for interdisciplinary team work.
- Survey/social action research at doctoral / post doctoral levels / as minor projects to be initiated.

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# **SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH : TRENDS AND ISSUES**

**Dr. B. Mohan Kumar**  
G.B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology  
Pantnagar



## **IASSI Conference on Social Science Research and Education : Trends and Issues**

**6-7 November 2009**

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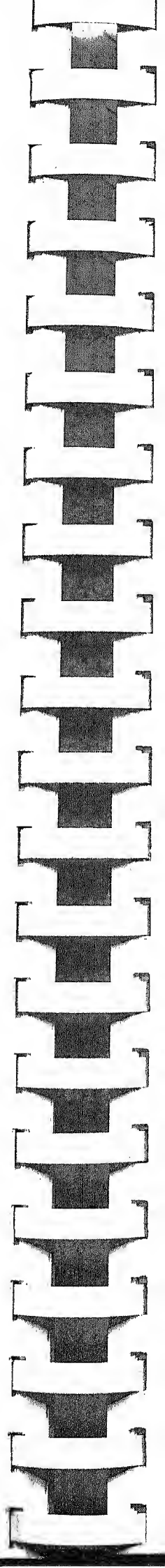


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[Note for Annual Conference of the Indian Association of Social Science Institutions Nov. 6-7, 2009 at Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow]

## Social Sciences in Agricultural Research: Trends & Issues

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While the natural sciences are about discovering, describing, predicting, controlling and altering material reality, and economics is about improving the management of scarce means, the social sciences are about interpreting reality to understand and transform it. However, subordinated to biological sciences and overshadowed by economics, the social sciences have been largely invisible and voiceless in the agricultural research system.

The apparent moorings of agricultural sciences are in biological sciences and its extant ramifications. The congruent faith in scientific (logico-experimental) methodology and in techno-scientific solutions as being panacea to alleviate nearly all problems may have led to disciplinary blindness. It may be partly accountable for relegation of social sciences (perceived as pre-paradigmatic in the Kuhnian sense) to the backwaters of the institutionalized agricultural research. It may have got aggravated due to perceiving social sciences as being non-rigorous and less credible, at most playing a supporting service role in benchmark survey and analysis. The donor-driven agenda of research is another reason. The case was different with the informal, vibrant and spontaneous *in situ* researches carried out by the farmers since time immemorial in symbiosis with diverse natural and social resources. The initial decontextualization of formal agricultural research alienated from the farmers and their time-tested practices may seem to have sidelined social sciences.

But a paradigm shift is discernible with incremental realization of limits inherent in extant agricultural sciences in terms of overt concern with componentiality (i.e. seed, fertilizer, pesticide, practices etc.) for enhancing productivity overshadowing the issues of applicability in, adoptability by and impacts on diverse farming systems, farmers and other stakeholders. The critical revelations related to designs of international agri-business, adverse environmental impacts and increasing hiatus between resource-rich and resource-scarce regions and people may have shocked the well-intended agricultural scientists whose painstaking efforts had initially succeeded in saving the Third World from the brink of food crisis.

Social scientific concern in agriculture got an indirect boost from the assertion of certain international funding agencies to incorporate issues germane to social sciences such as socio-





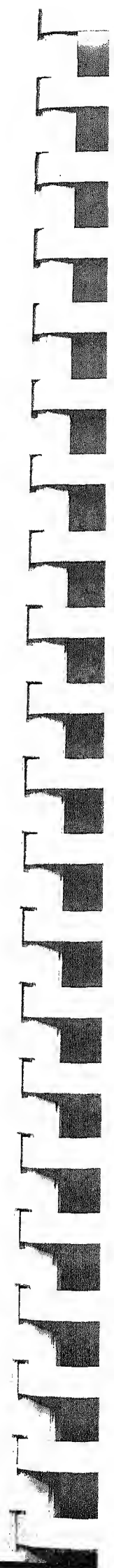
economic impact assessment and the farmers' perspectives in research. The new willingness of biological scientists to collaborate with social scientists is a reflection of such a trend. The institutionalization of multi-disciplinary approaches in agricultural research such as CIMMYT's Medium Term Plan and CGIAR's Challenge Programme of High-impact research has further encouraged collaboration with social sciences. Such problem-oriented research management has opened interesting opportunities for social scientists.

Three paradigmatic phases of social scientific research trends are discernible:

- (a) Diffusion-adoption studies of modern varieties and associated technologies from the 1950s to the 1970s;
- (b) Information from surveys for designing experiments for on-farm research (OFR and FSR) in the 1980s; and
- (c) Concern with long-term sustainability, socio-economic and environmental impact assessment, food security, nutritional security, livelihood security, gender issues, distribution of benefits and the likes emerged by the 1990s and continue to define research concerns.

One can discern four awareness stages of agricultural research and development since 1950: production, economic, ecological, and institutional. These are not stages where problems are resolved and then forgotten in the next stage. In fact, the stages should be seen as dimensions – not time frames – of the world food problem. A growing human population requires more food, distribution and equity problems remain, the environment increasingly faces stress, and our institutions lag behind technological development. The four dimensions are also the four pillars upon which effective agricultural research and development must be built. These four stages or dimensions of agricultural research are elements of single whole, not mutually exclusive parts, and the fact that the whole is more than the sum of the parts is a major reason for interdisciplinary research. If we keep in mind the four threads in setting research agendas, formulating policy, and determining funding priorities, a balanced approach to agricultural research and development can be achieved.

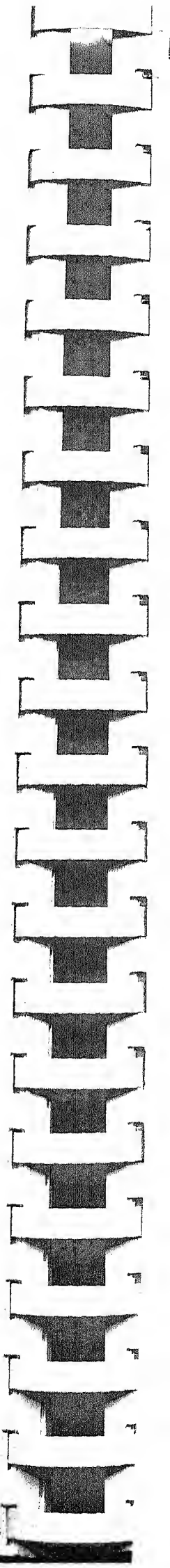
The development of social science has been implicitly predicated on two very different models of how change is brought about in rural communities and what role outsiders and scientists can play in that process. The more conventional approach suggests that a “good technology sells itself” and that working with communities merely requires that the “best bet options” are made available to the “categories of farmers” who are likely to benefit from them. In this model, which is still widely held by many natural scientists, a “research” organization has too few resources and no comparative advantage in doing dissemination, and is better placed to research and evaluate the dissemination and technology promotion activities carried out by



partners (local NGO's or national agricultural bodies). The alternate approach argues that understanding local processes of innovation, resource distribution, resource allocation decisions, and information transfer is essential to developing technologies relevant to their users' conditions. Integral to this second approach is the development of meaningful communication and learning across disciplinary boundaries which still remain problematic.

Despite the rhetoric of interdisciplinary collaboration, cross-disciplinary learning and communication remain complicated by the divergent ideas of what role "research" can and should play in bringing about change in rural communities. Resolving these divergences often falls to social scientists, since their disciplinary orientation predisposes them to thinking about such issues and their colleagues are more likely to see these issues as somehow separate from their daily activities of research. However, building common bodies of knowledge and practice can only happen with the full participation of all disciplines.

It is wiser to realise that each wave of enthusiasm for a new approach grows logically from its antecedents and is molded by the broader sociopolitical environment encompassing the world's food problems and solutions. As experience deepens and the sociopolitical environment changes, both donors and scientists make new assumptions about proper approaches to agricultural research and development.



# **DECLINE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN INDIA : THE UNIVERSITIES ARE FALTERING**

**Sucha Singh Gill**  
Punjabi University  
Patiala



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## **Decline of Social Science Research in India: The Universities are Faltering**

Sucha Singh Gill\*

There was a large expansion in social science research system after the independence. Several new universities were established with departments for teaching and research in different social sciences. The development of national statistical system for data collection, involvement of social scientists in the Planning Commission and other national bodies in decision making and evaluation of the government programmes, sponsoring of research projects by the various ministries played very important role expanding social science research capabilities. The government also established in early years under its control the specialised institutions such as University Grants Commission (UGC), Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Indian Council for Medical Research, the Institute of Manpower Research, the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, Indian Institute of Public Administration etc. To meet the national and regional educational requirements in higher education there was a large expansion in the number of universities in the country. In 1947 there were only 20 universities in the country and this increased to 367 in March 2006; (table I). This number has crossed now 400 marks. The number of colleges has gone up to 18064 in March 2006 (Planning Commission, 2007). In addition to this ICSSR was set up in 1969 by HRD Ministry, Government of India with specific objectives of promoting socio-economic research by



establishing institutes in different parts of the country, funded jointly by the central and state governments. The council has so far set up and funded, jointly with state governments 27 such institutes in different parts of the country. The council was also mandated to fund individual research projects and provide research fellowships.

Recently the government departments and public sector organisations, UN agencies, aid agencies of foreign governments, international financial agencies and private foundations have shown interest in funding research on socio-economic development and policy issues. This has led to mushrooming of non governmental organisations (NGOs) in research activities. This has gathered trend in the recent period especially after introduction of the new economic policy in 1991. Thus, there are three types of institutions which are involved in social science research. They are (i) universities, (ii) ICSSR supported research institutes and (iii) NGOs. The largest part of the research is conducted in the universities. In fact, the Universities are the places where proper integration between teaching and research is inherent in the system itself. The major part of research takes in the universities the form of M.Phil/Ph.D. thesis supplemented by research taken up by individual scholars partly funded by outside bodies. The ICSSR institutes are created for undertaking research in the specific areas and regions in the form of projects undertaken and sponsored by funding agencies. NGOs also follow this pattern but many among them are functioning on commercial lines and some of them are also action oriented.

## I

On the basis of review of research articles in social science journals and discussions with social scientists across the country the Fourth Review Committee of ICSSR (2007) reached the following conclusions:

"This Report has highlighted the growing commercialization of research and neglect of independent scholarly research that contributes to a better understanding of societal processes and inability of the Indian Council of Social Science Research to arrest this trend..... It has also highlighted the need for independent professional analysis and interpretation of emerging trends and their implications both for the revival of high standards of scholarships and for its important role for an open and democratic society. The committee has argued the case for a strong public sector initiative for this purpose by establishing the IASS (Indian Academy of Social Science in place of ICSSR) as an autonomous statutory body, and committing substantial larger public funds to support its activities."

The committee identified ingrained sceptical, if not hostile, attitude of the government and public authorities towards independent research oriented to generating knowledge. In this context a forceful plea has been made to increase in public financial support for independent high quality research. It was further observed that whatever funds are available for research they are largely allocated to cover studies addressing operational problems specifically related to policy centric issues and evaluation studies of selected programmes and policies. The objectives and scope of such research "are driven by sponsors' interest and their reports are seldom available to public domain or for independent scrutiny and debate". Consequently very little is left for rigorous, scholarly research on development and change. The other reported factors discouraging research are rigid conditions and bureaucratic procedures attached to funding, lukewarm interest in research among university teachers, lack of adequate supply of trained and motivated young teachers, dwindling flow of motivated researchers and research students due

to more lucrative opportunities in non research jobs in government and private sector and absence of cohesion among faculty and lack of interactive academic culture.

The Fourth Review Committee of ICSSR has largely and rightly focused on the working of ICSSR and its supported institutes. The committee makes very useful contributions to the analysis of current status of social sciences research in India. The factors contributing to unsatisfactory status of the research are correctly identified but the lessons are largely drawn from the experience of ICSSR and its funded institutes. The committee, therefore, misses very important source which is the root cause of the factors reported for decline in the research standards in social sciences. This is related to the status of institution of universities in the country its role in research. The university system in the country employs the largest pool of social science teachers and is the only source which supplies young researchers and research students to the whole system of social science research. The committee has not gone into the analysis of what is happening to this system in the recent years. Without analysing the malady of the university system the declining status of research in the country can not be understood. The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has not gone into this kind of exercise though it has displayed its general dissatisfaction for the present multi regulatory system of higher education institutions and recommended an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE). The NKC has recommended considerable expansion in higher education and opening up of 500 new universities with 50 national universities but a large part of its recommendation do not touch a large number of institutions in higher education. The elitist approach is quite visible from its recommendations (NKC, 2007). Much more sensible ideas are found in recently submitted

**Report of the Committee to Advise on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education, popularly known as Yashpal Committee Report (2009).**

**II**

Yashpal Committee (2009) has defined the university as:

"A University is a place where new ideas germinate, strike roots and grow tall and sturdy. It is a unique space, which covers the entire universe of knowledge. It is a place where creative minds converge, interact with each other and construct visions of new realities. Established notions of truth are challenged in the pursuit of knowledge."

There are very few universities in India which confirm to this concept/definition of the university. There are maladies which have crept into the system slowly while others have fast infected the system. The loss of primacy of the universities in India is attributed to erosion of their autonomy; undermining of undergraduate education; the growing distance between different areas of knowledge through strong invisible walls; the isolation of universities from the real world outside; and cross commercialisation of higher education. In social sciences among the universities there are strong walls between different disciplines which are taught in isolation from each other without realising their interconnectivity for understanding of the same social phenomenon of the society. Within the same discipline say of economics or political science or history or sociology or psychology the interaction among the faculty members is very less and factionalism is widely rampant. This has not allowed the quality of research to be developed. But this divide is much more in social science disciplines in the universities and social science research institutes. While former largely concentrate on the teaching and awarding of research degrees, the latter (social science research institutes) are involved in research without being involved in teaching. The research institutes have no control over the

training and quality of young researchers. As most of the universities are not involved in imparting of education at undergraduate level, therefore, they have to depend on the quality of PG students on the training by the colleges which are suffering fast decline in the quality of education. Not only poor level of teaching is imparted in some colleges, the situation is not better in some of the universities. In term of meeting minimum standards the UGC has imposed some conditions on the universities to avail of development grants which are allocated for five year (plan) period. A large number of state universities, deemed universities and private universities are not able to avail this grant. As shown in the table-I out of 367 universities of all type 205 get UGC funds. Thus, 152 universities (41.7 percent) are not in the position to avail the development grants. 27.2 percent of the state universities and 76 percent of deemed universities and 87.5 percent of private universities fall in this category. In the case of the state universities, the state government have freezed or cut down the grants of these university after 1991 or no grant was allocated to them after they were established in the era of neo-economic/neo-liberal policy. These universities are sick universities. They are authorized to issue degrees but of low quality. Some of these universities have so lowered the standards of education especially in research degrees that UGC has announced in June 2009 discontinuation of M.Phil programme through distance education mode and have made it mandatory for the universities to admit research students in Ph.D. programme through entrance test and service these programmes through regular course work of minimum duration of six months. At the same time the UGC has fixed a ceiling of eight research students for a research guide/supervisor. These steps were taken by UGC in wake of poor/sub standard Ph.D. Thesis and reports of wide spread plagiarism and thesis being written by ghost writers/supervisors charging hefty money from the

candidates. Already thousands of such degree holders are in the job market and several of them have been able to manage appointments in the universities and colleges. These poorly trained teachers when become themselves research supervisors/guides for research degree, they multiply the poor quality of research degrees.

The state universities and deemed universities account for 86.4 percent of the total universities. The state universities alone share is 59.1 percent. When faced with financial crunch following the state governments' fragile financial position, these universities have initiated commercialisation of education. They have diversified into engineering and technology, management and other professional courses. The positions in the social science disciplines have been kept vacant or shifted to professional courses where fee is charged at par with unaided private/commercial colleges. This has further contributed to the precarious position of social disciplines. The meritorious students who opt due to mistake or otherwise for social science research career hardly find any job. This has created surplus in supply of qualified persons. A large reserve of unemployed persons is driving out good students from basic disciplines. This is the reason that the very few research publications, the research monographs and research articles are produced by the university teachers especially from the state universities. The position of colleges is worst in this matter. Out of 18064 colleges only 42.42 percent (6109) are entitled for UGC grants. The rest do not qualify. The 57.58 percent of the colleges (11955) are not qualified for the UGC grant and pose a great challenge for UGC in respect of maintenance of standards of teaching and examination (Planning Commission, 2007). The low quality of teaching in the majority of colleges and the University with poor quality of research explain the very low contribution of this large pool of faculty in social sciences research journals (table-2 and table-3). It is

evident that ICSSR supported 27 institutes have contributed 10.7 percent articles in selected social journals compared to 33 percent by 341 universities and 18064 colleges. Similarly the share of articles of 27 ICSSR supported institutes in EPW is 10 percent compared to the 24 percent share of the universities and colleges.

**Table-I**

Distribution of Universities in India in Different Categories (March 31, 2006)

S. No.	Category	Total Number	Number of funded by UGC	Directly funded by the Central Govt.
1	Central Universities	20	18	2
2	State Universities	217	158	-
3	Deemed Universities	104	25	-
4	Institutions established by State Legislative Acts	05	03	-
5	Institutions of National Importance established by Central Legislation	13	-	13
6	Private Universities	8	1	-
7	Total	367	205	15

Source: Planning Commission (2007), **Draft Report of Working Group on Higher Education, 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan**, Government of India, New Delhi.

**Table-2****Institutional Affiliation of Authors of Articles in Selected Social Science Journals (2004-05)**

S. No.	Institution	Number of Papers	Percentage of the total
1	ICSSR Supported institutes	58	10.7
2	Other Autonomous Research Institutes	156	28.8
3	Foreign Scholars/NRIs/Foreign Universities	131	24.2
4	International Organizations	07	1.3
5	Universities/Colleges	179	33.0
6	Government Departments	9	1.7
7	Independent Researchers	2	0.4
	Total	542	100.00

Note: Journals covered are **contribution to Indian Sociology, Demography India; Indian Economic and Indian Economic and Social History Review; Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics; Indian Journal of Labour Economics; Journal of Quantitative Economics; and Sociological Bulletin**

Source: The Fourth Review Committee (2007), **Restructuring The Indian Council of Social Science Research**, ICSSR, New Delhi.



**Table-3****Institutional Affiliation of Authors of EPW Articles (2006)**

S.No.	Institutions	Number of Paper	Percentage of total
1	ICSSR funded Institutes	20	10
2	Other Autonomous Institutes	59	29
3	Foreign Universities and Foreign scholars. (including NRIs)	52	26
4	Universities and Colleges	50	24
5	NGOs/Individuals	22	11
	Total	203	100

Source: The Fourth Review Committee (2007), **Restructuring of Indian Council of Social Science Research**, ICSSR, New Delhi.

The evident collected by the Fourth Review Committee of ICSSR (2007) brings out that the situation is very pathetic in the universities and colleges in the research output compared to the very small number of ICSSR funded institutes. It is the university system which prepares the foundation for social science research standards in the country by training young researchers through their research degree programmes. Thus, the major source of weakening position in social science research can be located in the poor working of the universities largely for the state and deemed universities and private universities. Without improving the standards of research training (M.Phil/Ph.D programme) the quality of research can not be improved. It will be fair to raise a question whether the universities and

deemed universities which do not qualify for assistance/grants from the UGC be allowed to award research degrees (M.Phil and Ph.D)? The same question can be raised about the department/centers within the eligible universities. The license to issue research degree need to be withdrawn from the sick/substandard universities for specified period till they demonstrate the capacity to improve the quality of training in terms of adequate/specified number of qualified teachers.

### III

The ICSSR and the IASSI must come forward in taking up the issues of quality of research in social sciences. There is need to establish some standards for research degree programmes. This is need not only for a model course curricula for research degree programmes but also some standards for outcome of these programmes. For instance, no research degree is worth if it does not result in publication of some research papers (one for M.Phil and atleast two for Ph.D) in the refereed journals. The ICSSR and IASSI can identify such journals and subject them to review by independent panel of scholars every five years.

The ICSSR and IASSI also need to engage themselves in dialogue with the Union government, and state governments for the significance of social sciences for national building and establishment of human society. A plea need to be made to include the study of social sciences as an essential component in the professional graduate courses such as engineering (on IIT pattern), medicine and allied professions and integrated five year post graduate programmes. This is needed absorb a large number of qualified teachers and researchers in the job market. This would attract some good students for social science subjects both at graduate and post graduate levels.

To attract students towards social science research liberal fellowship programmes need to be introduced. Every students who is admitted to Ph.D.

programme must be awarded a fellowship at the rate fixed by the UGC. The teachers who are engaged in the supervision/guidance of research students, their work must be counted as a part of work load. Such teachers must announce, in the time table, their availability to the students at least on those hours. To encourage research post doctorate fellowship need to be created in every university/research institute. At the same time liberal research funding with flexibility on conditions to employ staff are needed. This would require a large financial support from the governments to encourage and support research. The focus need to be made to improve the quality of research in the universities. They have to be multifaculty and provided liberal support and monitoring by the regulatory bodies like UGC and periodic review by ICSSR. The suggestions by the ICSSR Review Committee and Yashpal Committee are worth consideration in this context.

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